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THE
First Presbyterian Church,
AUBURN, N. Y.

1810-1876.

THE HISTORY

OF THE

First Presbyterian Church,

AUBURN, N. Y.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED ON SUCCESSIVE SABBATHS, JULY 2D AND 9TH, 1876, IN
ACCORDANCE WITH THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
IN THE OBSERVANCE OF THE NATION'S CENTENNIAL,

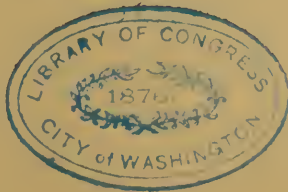
BY

CHARLES HAWLEY, D. D.,

PASTOR.



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DISCOURSE.

“Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces that ye may tell it to the generation following.”—PSALM XLVIII: 12, 13.

This day, sacred alike to piety and patriotism, has been chosen by the authorities of the Presbyterian Church of the United States to commemorate the nation's centennial. A prominent feature in its observance, commended to each congregation, is the rehearsal of its own history as forming a part of the common heritage of the church and the nation. Presbyterianism, as a system of religious doctrine and ecclesiastical order, had nearly reached its centennial on this continent, at the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.¹ The part it had in the events which led to the independence of the Colonies and subsequently in shaping the republic, is well known, and forms no inconsiderable portion of the history of the country itself at that early period.

It is no part of my duty on this occasion, to review that historical era, or recite the progress since achieved in the direction then indicated. It is rather the more humble task of recounting what has been done on this ground, that we may see how far events and individuals here have contributed toward the grand result. I will be as brief as possible and be just; and if the story tax your patience, in the telling of it, I beg you will consider that the occasion can occur only this once in our lives.

¹ The distinction of laying the foundations of the Presbyterian Church as an organized body in this country, belongs to Francis McKamie, an Irishman by birth, a student at one of the Scotch universities and a licentiate of the Presbytery of Laggan in 1681. Three years later, in 1684, he organized the Presbyterian Church at Snow Hill, Maryland. Here in the narrow neck of land between the Chesapeake and the ocean, sheltered by the mild laws of a colony founded by a Roman Catholic nobleman, the Presbyterian Church of America began its existence.—*Hist. Pres. Church*, Vol 1, p. 4.

Neither this church, nor Auburn, with the earliest settlement of which it is identified, has as yet completed its century. One hundred years ago, there was no trace, on this ground, of our present civilization. The only fragment of Revolutionary history which attaches to this vicinity, is connected with the expedition under General Sullivan in 1779, planned by Washington himself, in retaliation of repeated massacres by the Indians, among the border settlements of New York and Pennsylvania, and executed with relentless vengeance upon the Senecas and Cayugas. Their villages were burned; their fields of corn just maturing for the harvest were destroyed; their gardens and orchards devastated, and the country thrown back a century in its civilization,¹ within the brief space of a fortnight. This work of destruction among the Cayugas was executed by a portion of Sullivan's army, detached for the purpose, and under the command of Col. Zebulon Butler, the gallant officer who had made such a heroic defence, the year before, at Wyoming against an attack of Indians and tories, and whose defeat, by vastly superior numbers, was followed by one of the most cruel and bloody massacres known to savage warfare. Darkness had put an end to the pursuit of the broken and shattered ranks along the line of defence for the protection of that charming valley; but not to the horrors. It was a dreadful night for Wyoming, as the enemy elated by their victory, held their frightful orgies on the battle field, torturing and tomahawking their prisoners, while the terrified inhabitants were flying to the mountains and forests beyond, under cover of the darkness.² Among those who made their escape on that murderous night, taking her two boys on horseback, was the mother of Dan and David Hyde, names prominent

¹ "It is apprehended that few of the present generation are aware of the advances which the Indians in the wide and beautiful country of the Cayugas and Senecas had made in the march of civilization. They had several towns and many large villages, laid out with a considerable degree of regularity. They had framed houses, some of them well finished, having chimneys and painted. They had broad and productive fields; and in addition to an abundance of apples were the enjoyment of the pear and the more luscious peach."—*Stone's Life of Brant*, Vol. 11, p. 25.

² For a minute and graphic account of the whole scene, see Lossing's *Field Book of the Revolution*, Vol. 1, pp. 355-363.

in the early annals of Auburn, and who herself, thirty years after, became a member of this church at the first communion after its organization.

It had been claimed for the Cayugas that they were at least neutral at this stage of the war, as were the Oneidas; but Col. Butler found white scalps, freshly taken, hung up in their houses; and with these evidences of their treachery before his eyes, and the scene of Wyoming vivid in his memory, we may well believe that he executed the work of destruction committed to him with a vigorous and unsparing hand. He burned three towns, including their capital, destroying also a large quantity of grain, fruits and vegetables. Whatever may be thought of the expediency of the expedition under Sullivan, as a military measure, it resulted in opening the way for the speedy settlement of this region of the State, until then closed against the permanent abode of the white man.

More than ~~two~~ hundred years antecedent to these events, persistent and heroic efforts had been made by the French Jesuit Fathers to win the Iroquois to the christian faith; and as early as 1656, one hundred and forty years before any of our missionaries came into this region, an attempt was made by Father Renè Menard to establish a mission among the Cayugas, and a rude chapel was built at their capital, located on the east side of the Cayuga lake, a mile and a half north of the present village of Union Springs. This, together with the other French missions of that date, was soon broken up by wars with the French in Canada and neighboring tribes, until 1668, when another mission was founded by Father Stephen de Carheil, which continued with varying fortunes, but at no time with encouraging success until 1684, when this accomplished and intrepid missionary was plundered of all he possessed and driven from the country. I know of no mission field, ancient or modern, which presents a record of more devoted and patient toil, or of more splendid sacrifice of learning, genius and piety than this among the Cayuga Indians, nearly a century and a quarter before the first white settler built his cabin on their ancient domain.

There are also traces of Moravian missionaries in this vicinity as early as 1750, but they established no mission. One of them, David Zeisberger, distinguished both for zeal and learning, made several visits among the Cayugas, and at one time with the purpose of permanent labors; but the first night of his arrival at one of their principal villages, he was so maltreated by the leader of a party of Dutch rum traders that he barely escaped with his life, and the effort was abandoned.¹

Forty years subsequent to this, 1795, Daniel Thatcher, of the Presbytery of Orange, N. J., under a commission from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, passed through this part of the country, seeking out its scattered families and preaching as he had opportunity. In 1798, Asa Hillyer of the same Presbytery, and pastor at Orange, performed similar service in this vicinity. Though confining his labors chiefly to Genoa and Aurora, he visited the new settlement here. He is the first Presbyterian minister I can trace to this spot, and it is claimed by his biographer that he preached the first sermon ever preached in what is now the city of Auburn.² He was the intimate associate and close friend of James Richards, one of the first professors of our Theological Seminary, and was present at the convention held in Auburn in 1837, which resulted in the formation of the New School Branch of the Presbyterian Church. With a fine person, a countenance open and genial and of winning manners, Dr. Hillyer is described as a model of Christian and ministerial dignity, consistency and loveliness.³ In a pastorate of thirty-two years (1801-1833), his church, at Orange, became one of the largest and most influential in the State. He died in 1840; and his death called out the comment from Dr. James Alexander: "How beautiful is goodness! Fierce orthodoxy burns as well as warms; but Christ-like gentleness sheds life all around it."⁴

The Presbyterianism of New Jersey, to which this whole region is singularly indebted, was represented by still farther mis-

¹ Schweinitz's Life of Zeisberger.

² Sprague's Annals of Am. Pulpit, Vol. 111, p. 533.

³ Hist. Pres. Church, Vol. 1, p. 557.

⁴ Forty Years Familiar Letters, Vol. 1, p. 313.

sionary work in this immediate neighborhood. Aaron Condit, father of our late esteemed professor, then pastor of the church of Hanover, N. J., made a missionary tour on horseback, in company with one of his deacons, having special regard to the families that had emigrated from his own parish. He came as far west as Aurelius, and reaching a small cluster of houses near this place after the day's ride, held an evening service, and administered the Lord's Supper to eleven persons—a number suggestive of the original institution of the ordinance. While yet a licentiate of the New Brunswick Presbytery, Matthew LaRue Perrine,¹ one of the first three professors of our Theological Seminary, with James Richards² and Henry Mills,³ all from New Jersey, itinerated over this ground, when as yet the continuous forests could only be traversed by the well trodden Indian trails or the freshly blazed paths of the first settlers.⁴

The fruit of these and kindred evangelistic labors quickly appeared in a religious awakening in this section of the State, destined to be remembered as the Great Revival of 1799. Among the more prominent missionaries immediately connected with the work, was Seth Williston and Jedediah Bushnell, both of whom labored in this county. On every side the good work spread. Places of meeting could not be procured large enough to hold the

¹ Dr. Perrine was born in Monmouth, N. J., in 1777, and graduated in 1797, at Nassau Hall. He studied theology with Dr. Woodhull of his native town. Under the several appointments of the General Assembly he labored as a missionary in Southern and Western New York. He was afterward pastor at Bottle Hill, N. J., and of the Spring Street Church in the city of New York. In 1821 he was chosen Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Polity in the Auburn Seminary, and remained in this position until his death Feb. 11, 1836.

² Dr. Richards was born in New Canaan, Conn., in 1767. He passed the freshman year in Yale College, and his subsequent studies were conducted by Dr. Burnett of Norwalk, and Dr. Dwight, then of Greenfield. He was licensed to preach in 1793; became pastor in Morristown the following year, and in Newark, N. J., in 1809. In 1823, he was elected to the chair of Christian Theology in the Auburn Seminary, and died suddenly Aug. 2, 1843, having met his classes as usual on the day previous to his death.

³ Dr. Mills was born in Morristown, N. J., March 12, 1786. He graduated at Princeton College in 1802. He was teacher for some time of the academy in his native village, and afterward in Elizabethtown, N. J. He was also a tutor for two years in his Alma Mater. He studied theology with Dr. Richards, and in 1816 was ordained pastor at Woodbridge, N. J. In 1821 he was called to the Professorship of Biblical Criticism in the Auburn Seminary, and after serving in that position for thirty years, resigned on account of physical infirmities, and was made Professor Emeritus. He died at Auburn June 10, 1867, aged 81 years.

⁴ Ms. Sermon of Dr. Mills preached at the ordination of Henry A. Nelson, July 29, 1846.

crowds who pressed to hear the word. Bushnell reports the people every where anxious to receive the Gospel. Williston writes of Aurelius that "the Spirit of God is poured out upon one part of the town." He sees the way prepared for the establishment of churches, and exclaims with more than his wonted enthusiasm—"O that these lights were all burning and shining, what a lustre they would shed around our desert!"¹ This revival, occurring the last year of the last century, determined the influences which shaped the character of the infant communities then springing up over this region, and fixed it for a generation, while it led to the formation of churches within the field it so greatly blessed.

We have now come in the order of events to the organization of the first church within the present limits of Auburn and Aurelius (then one town), out of which ten years afterward came this church as its second colony. It was formed, Sept. 7, 1801, under the direction of Jacob Cram, a missionary sent into Western New York by the Massachusetts Society, with instructions to give part of his time to labors among the Indians. The original members were Samuel Colver from Egremont, Mass.; Gilbert Weed from Greenfield; Josiah Mix and Rebecca Mix from Greenville; and Jacob Shaw from Norton, Mass. They presented letters from their respective churches and were organized into a Congregational Church at the house of Ichabod Wilkinson, in the south part of the town, the place since known as the Penick farm and situated on the Poplar Ridge road. The house is still standing. Articles of faith, twenty-four in number, and similar to those in use among the New England churches, were adopted. Fifteen names were added to the roll within the first year, viz: Josiah Taylor, Sen., Josiah Taylor, Jr., and Elizabeth Taylor, from Ballston; Joseph Thayer, Abigail Thayer, from Thetford, Vt.; Isaac Merwin, Sarah Merwin, Huldah Thorp, Sarah Thorp from Harpersfield; Bethia Foster, from Hartford, Ct.; Joshua Davis, and Jesse Davis, from Great Valley, Pa. Sarah Wilkinson and Anne Wilkinson were received on profession of faith. Gilbert Weed and Joseph Thayer were chosen as the first deacons.

¹ Letter in Connecticut Evangelical Magazine, under date April 29, 1799.

It was incorporated as the First Congregational Society of Aurelius, May 21, 1802, at a meeting held at the house of Henry Moore, about a mile from the Half Acre on the road to Union Springs, and nine trustees chosen, viz: Thomas Mumford, Henry Moore, Josiah Taylor, Hezekiah Goodwin, Moses Lyon, Jesse Davis, Joseph Grover, John Grover, and William Bostwick. These names represented different settlements within the town, in several of which small congregations had been gathered that subsequently grew into churches, our own among the number.

Mr. Mumford resided in Cayuga, and was one of the earliest settlers of the town. He came from the vicinity of Hartford, Ct.; and was appointed surrogate of the county of Onondaga in 1797. He was one of the originators of the Bank of Auburn in 1817, and its first President. He was the largest donor to found the Auburn Theological Seminary, 1819, contributing to this object two thousand dollars, which was twice the amount of any other individual subscription. He united with the church on profession of his faith in 1806.

Joseph and John Grover resided at the settlement which bore their name, and now Fleming Hill; the former was supervisor of the town from 1797 to 1801; the latter held the same office from 1803 to 1807, and was also a member of the Legislature in the Assembly, for three terms from 1805 to 1808; and both men of character and influence. Three of the trustees were inn-keepers, who, in those days, were patrons of churches; Henry Moore, whose house served the place of a church edifice until 1809, when a partly finished building was opened for public worship at the Half Acre; Hezekiah Goodwin, whose tavern was a mile from the Half Acre on the road to Cayuga, and since known as the Hunt place; and William Bostwick, whose inn at Hardenbergh's Corners, was as famous with travelers for its comfort and hospitable cheer, as its keeper was respected for his public spirit and good deeds.¹ Jesse Davis was a substantial farmer in the south part of the town, and is remembered for the characteristics of rec-

¹ The lot on which the Court House stands was his gift, as also were the spacious grounds of St. Peter's Church, of which he was one of the founders in 1805.

titude and piety, which have been perpetuated to the third generation. Josiah Taylor, who was originally from Norwalk, Ct., and fought by the side of his four brothers in the Revolutionary war, also represented the south part of the town, while Moses Lyon resided near the Half Acre.

In the summer of 1801, and before the church was formed, David Higgins then pastor at North Lyme, Ct., visited Aurelius during a brief missionary service of the Association of Connecticut; and the following spring, May 25, 1802, a call was extended to him by the church, with the concurrent voice of the society, to become their pastor. The salary was fixed at five hundred dollars a year. About the same time he received a similar call from Bloomfield, in this State, which he had visited in the same missionary tour; but giving the preference to Aurelius, he removed here in the summer of 1802 with his family, consisting of his wife and seven children, the youngest of them still a babe, and a favorite house servant, Mercy Atwell, who afterward had the good fortune to marry a son of Deacon Thayer—in all ten persons, and no small contribution to a new settlement. The journey was accomplished in a large covered wagon which also contained some necessary furniture and provisions, and required as many days as it now takes hours to traverse the same distance. Moses Lyon had driven his team all the way to North Lyme to aid in removing the household goods. On arriving at Cayuga, they found that the house provided for their reception by Mr. Mumford was filled with tenants, and that he with his family was absent on a visit among his Connecticut friends. They secured, however, a small building, with a single room and a loft, which had been used as a printing office. This barely afforded them shelter, and obliged them to extemporise conveniences for the ordinary housework, as cooking and washing on the shore of the lake in primitive style for a few days, until the new house of Henry Moore was so far completed as to afford them ample accommodations.

The installation of Mr. Higgins occurred October 6th of the same year (1802) by a council composed of five Congregational

and two Presbyterian ministers, with delegates from twelve churches.¹

The moderator of the council was Jedediah Chapman, who, while pastor at Orange, N. J., the predecessor of Dr. Hillyer, before mentioned, from 1766 to 1800, warmly espoused the cause of the Colonies in the struggle for Independence; and such was the hatred which his patriotism evoked from the loyalists, that at times his life was in danger. He was now pastor at Geneva, giving one half of his time to missionary service under appointment of the General Assembly. The other ministers of the council were Seth Williston, who acted as scribe; John Lindsley, Joseph Grover, Reuben Parmlee, Joshua Leonard, Timothy Field.

All its proceedings were conducted with marked deliberation. Though the pastor elect had for fifteen years served a staid New England congregation, and in a region noted then as now for its intelligence and as the nursery of distinguished men in the public service; and came with the emphatic endorsement of the Middlesex Consociation, of which he was a member, of his standing among the ministers and churches of Connecticut, and likewise armed with private testimonials to the same effect, all of which were read before the council, he was nevertheless subjected to as rigid an examination, both in experimental religion and systematic divinity, as if he had been on his first trial for licensure. The council being satisfied with his testimonials and examinations, voted to proceed with his installation agreeably to the request of the church. The confession of faith and covenant adopted by the church having been read before the council, Mr. Higgins, at this stage, suggested a difficulty in his own mind as to the twenty-fourth article, which held that the government of each particular church rested in the body of the brethren—a kindred question to that which perplexed a famous council of recent date—and after considerable discussion the church was advised, under

¹ The following delegates representing churches were present, viz: Oliver Whitmore, Geneva; Noah Crane, Bristol; Joseph Brace, North Bloomfield; Ezra Whittlesey, Lisle; Harvey Steel, Canandaigua; Ahijah Warren, Scipio; John Norris, Jefferson; Caleb Lyon, Milton; Eli Clark, Skaneateles; Dan Bradley, Marcellus; Hezekiah Freeman, Camillus; Moses Basset, Cazenovia..

the circumstancees, to rescind the objectionable article, and a church meeting was called forthwith to deliberate on the subject.¹

The council re-assembled at nine o'clock the next morning, and the church having announced that they had stricken from their confession the article to which exception had been taken, it was voted to proceed to the installation at ten o'clock. The proposals for the support of the pastor elect were now presented, and his compliance with the same. The Trustees were then introduced to the council, who on coming forward acknowledged, in presence of the body, the instrument of agreement with Mr. Higgins to have been executed by them—he also acknowledging the same on his part.

With this cautious procedure at every step, all the arrangements for each part of the service having been previously arranged, the council repaired to the grove just opposite Moore's tavern, where the congregation had already assembled. The original forest trees had been trimmed and rough benches prepared for the occasion. It was a golden October day; and this being the first installation service on that part of the Military Tract east of Cayuga lake, including the present counties of Cayuga and Onondaga, it excited an unwonted interest and attracted a large concourse of people. Each minister in the council took part in the exercises.

The opening prayer was offered by Reuben Parmlee, who came from Connecticut in 1798, and was minister of that part of the town of Bloomfield now known as Victor.

The sermon was preached by Seth Williston from 1 Cor. ix: 14, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." The council voted to publish the sermon, which was printed under the title: "The temporal support of the gospel ministry a divine appointment; the

¹ The article read as follows: "We believe the government of the church ought to consist in the body of the brethren in every particular church; but we conceive it to be the duty of the church to comply with the request of any aggrieved brother, to call an advisory Council delegated by sister churches."

scriptural proof of which is presented.”¹ Mr. Williston was an indefatigable missionary in this part of the state and instrumental beyond any of his co-laborers in founding churches, one of which at Lisle, Chenango County, he was then serving as pastor. After a ministry there of ten years, he was installed over the Presbyterian church in Durham, among the Catskill Mountains, on the fourth of July, 1810. I have, as a lad, the most vivid recollections of him, as he was often a guest in my father’s family; and later and more serious memories of him as conducting my examination for licensure, with the rigidity of a stern Hopkinsian, through two entire sessions of the presbytery, and for several hours on the single point of original sin. He was the author of eleven volumes on theological subjects and of numerous pamphlets and tracts, continuing to preach and write until his death at the advanced age of eighty one years.

The “prayer of consecration” was offered by Joseph Grover, a venerable clergyman who had come from Parsippany, N. J., two years before, and was now preaching at Bristol. The moderator gave the charge to the pastor; and Joshua Leonard, who came from Ellington, Ct., in 1799, to Cazenovia, where the same year he organized the church of which he was the minister, gave the right hand of fellowship. The charge to the people was by John Lindsley of Ovid, where he organized in the year 1800 the church of which he was then pastor. Of Scotch Irish lineage, he was as sound in the faith as he was indomitable in his zeal for the spread of the truth. He and the moderator were then the only permanently settled Presbyterian ministers in Western New York, and the only members of the council from our own denomination. The concluding prayer was offered by Timothy Field, who studied theology with President Dwight of Yale College, and on whose recommendation he was called to Canandaigua, where two years before this, in 1800, he was ordained pastor—the first ordination in the Genesee country.

Such were the beginnings of our history as a church; and such

¹ The writer is indebted to Miss Myra Higgins of White Lake, Mich., for a copy of this sermon.

were the men who laid the earliest foundations of religious order in this town three quarters of a century ago.

In the meantime, the settlement which gave rise to this favored city was already putting forth the promise of its future. Although, as I have said, Auburn had no part in the stirring events of our Revolutionary struggle, yet we may say that it was born of the spirit which gave the nation being, and has until now wrought in its life. The character of its founder, Col. John L. Hardenbergh, was of the stamp of that memorable period, and could have been produced only by the hardships, sacrifices and patriotic impulses of those eventful times. His family name is prominent in the colonial history of the State as early as 1640, the date of the immigration of Arnoldus van Hardenbergh to New York, a free merchant from the Netherlands with a cargo of wares for the colony;¹ and from that date onward distinguished in its political and military annals. He had himself borne a part in the long and sanguinary conflict in which national independence was won, entering the American army as early at least as June 21, 1777, the date of his commission as Lieutenant of the Second N. Y. Regiment, and remaining in active service until the close of the war. He was for a time on Washington's staff; and two years after his first commission, had a command in the expedition under Sullivan against the Senecas and Cayugas, and kept a detailed journal of the campaign which is still preserved in manuscript. He thus gained, as a soldier, the first personal knowledge of this part of the country, but more particularly ten years afterward as one of State surveyors of the military tract reserved for bounty lands. This was in the years 1789 and 1790—the Indian titles having just been extinguished by treaty, and before the most advanced pioneer had ventured to fix his abode in this vicinity. Thus he passed with chain and compass over a large part of the territory through which, ten years before, he had marched with the torch and the sword; and familiar as he had become with every portion of the ground, he fixed upon this spot as combining more completely the natural advantages for a

¹ Col. Hist.

large town than any other within his survey. Forbidding as the place was, with its miry swamps dark with hemlocks and flanked by sharp and broken hills, to the settler in search of good farming lands, it struck his eye as a surveyor, for its superior water power, and so he characterizes it on his survey map, two years before he came into its possession, as "a good mill site." This was within lot number forty-seven, a mile square including that part of the city east of the line of North and South streets. The original patentee was Capt. John Doughty of the Second N. Y. Regiment, from whom it passed to Martin and Josiah Ogden Hoffman. The lands received by Col. Hardenbergh for his military services were located in Onondaga; after disposing of which, he purchased of the Hoffmans lot forty-seven for one hundred and eighty pounds state currency, the deed of conveyance bearing date Feb. 16, 1792. The same year he received a commission as Major in a state battalion including the district of Aurelius, and the subsequent year (1793) was appointed by Gov. George Clinton one of the associate Justices for the county of Herkimer, which then covered this territory; and the same year was designated as one of the commissioners to lay out and construct a portion of the Genesee turnpike. He had already built a log house on the present site of the City Hall when there were but three dwelling houses on the road between Onondaga and Cayuga Ferry,¹ and a rude saw mill farther up the creek; and was making preparations to erect a grist mill twenty one feet square, which was completed in 1794, and stood near where the outlet crosses Genesee street; and this was the nucleus of the settlement which naturally took the name of Hardenbergh's Corners.

Its principal rivals, for a while, were Aurora, first settled in 1790, and made the county seat in 1799; and Grover settlement on Fleming Hill; but neither the rich farming lands of the latter, nor the attractive situation of the former, nestling on the borders of Cayuga lake, could compete with the little stream flowing from the Owasco with its frequent cascades, each a mill site and des-

¹ Col. Hist.

tinued to be lined with machinery, the products of which in this centennial year are not only contributing to the interest of the great Exposition, but are finding a market in almost every part of the civilized world.

In 1794 William Bostwick, a carpenter by trade, added a tavern, and Abraham Bristol a blacksmith shop to the conveniences of the place. The same year Solomon Tibbles, a soldier of the Revolution, and connected with the Sullivan expedition, built a log cabin on the west side of North street, and is said to have made the first clearing for the cemetery in that part of the city. He soon after became one of the settlers of Clarksville, and was long one of its most respected residents. The names of four of his family appear on our church register between the years of 1817 and 1821, on profession of their faith.

Noah Olmsted, who took an active part in the incorporation of this society as one of its original trustees, located in 1795 on lands now the farm of Charles Standart. He served in the war of 1812, with the rank of Major, and was distinguished for his skill and bravery. He nearly lost his life at the battle of Queens-town Heights, while reconnoitering the enemy's position. A cannon ball shattered the stump on which he was mounted, and so disabled him that he was compelled to retire from the service. He died in 1820.

About the same time Elijah Esty, of Puritan ancestry, and his wife a descendant of the Williams family that came over in the Mayflower, emigrated from Roxbury, Mass., first to Westmoreland, N. Y., and from there to this place with their two children—Sarah, (Mrs. Wood) who died a few weeks since after a membership in this church of fifty nine years; and Joseph who became a communicant here in 1817, and afterward an elder in the First church of Ithaca, where he still resides one of its most venerable and esteemed citizens. Mr. Esty soon erected a tannery on the present corner of North and Seminary streets; also a dwelling house near by, which is still standing, having undergone some changes to suit the times. He died in 1812, one year after the organization of the church, and the same year in which his wife

became a communicant. Her second marriage was with Major Olmstead, whom she also survived, and at the time of her death in 1867 was about the last of the original settlers of Auburn.

The year 1796 is marked by the formation of the first religious society in this vicinity. A colony of ten families from Gettysburgh, Pa., had made a settlement the previous year about three miles up the Owasco, and at once organized a Reformed Protestant Dutch church, which subsequently took corporate form and title, Sept. 23, 1796, at a meeting held at the house of Col. Hardenbergh, who identified himself with this society in the faith and order of which he had been educated. A copy of his New Testament and Psalm book in one volume, in the Holland language, is still preserved; and bearing a corresponding date under his own signature with his army commission, it shows not only the signs of ordinary use, but the unmistakable marks of the exposure and hardship incident to a soldier's life. The same year (1796) he was married to Martina, daughter of Raeliff Brinkerhoff, one of the first two deacons of the Owasco church; and the names of his two children, Maria and John Herring appear on its baptismal register in the years 1798 and 1800, under the ministry of Abram Brokaw. Col. Hardenbergh died after a brief illness on the 25th of April 1806, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and was buried in the North street cemetery with military honors. Mr. Higgins preached the funeral sermon from the Epistle to the Philippians III: 20, 21, "For our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change our vile body and fashion it like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." The horse with the sword and uniform of the deceased officer was led by Harry Freeman, one of the Colonel's slaves to whom he had given his freedom, followed by a large procession, and presenting an imposing scene. Thus, fourteen years after the settlement of the place, passed away its pioneer and founder. He was a firm patriot and a brave soldier¹ in the

¹ His name appears on the Roll of Honor in the cabinet of revolutionary remains kept in Washington's head quarters at Newburgh.

time when his country needed every hand and heart for its defence, and withal a genial companion and a kind hearted, generous man. He was not always careful of his own interests, and was sometimes imposed upon by those in whom he confided as if they were as trustworthy as himself. If a neighbor wanted a bushel or two of grain, he might be trusted to measure it himself and render his own account. In this way and in others characteristic of him, he doubtless now and then lost pecuniarily, but they gave him a strong hold upon the better and larger class of his co-pioneers, and a leading influence at this forming period in our history. Indeed, Auburn owes very much to the spirit, foresight and enterprise of its founder.

The year 1796 is also signalized in the history of the settlement by the building of the first school house, a log structure on the west side of North street near Van Anden; and the opening of a school by Benjamin Phelps. Five years later what was known as the red school house was built on the southwest corner of Genesee and South streets. This was a frame building, and is noted in the annals of the church as the place where the first meetings for public worship were held under the ministry of Mr. Higgins, until David Horner built the Centre House, whose "long room" presented more ample accommodations. There being no other congregation in the place, it embraced all who prized religious privileges without regard to denominational preferences. It is a tradition among our Episcopal friends, that St. Peter's church of Auburn owes its early origin (1805) to an assault upon the liturgy by the Puritan pastor, occasioned by its use at one of the services when he was absent at one of his other appointments in the parish, which at the time embraced four congregations, to each of which he gave a Sabbath in rotation. The story is quite probable when we bear in mind the attitude of the English church, as a body, during the Revolutionary war, associating its liturgy in the memories of the patriotic clergy of New England, of whom Mr. Higgins was one, with British oppression and religious intolerance. There were individual exceptions, conspicuous from their rareness, of devotion to the cause of Independ-

ence; but, as was natural, the weight of influence exerted by that church and its clergy was with the mother country. Moreover the Episcopacy of those days was also associated with doctrines and practices wholly at variance with Puritan orthodoxy and strictness of habit; and more than all with a conflict of principles older than our Revolution and of which that was the legitimate result. I allude to the incident here as a striking illustration of the spirit of those early times, when lines were sternly drawn and every inch of ground gained by sacrifice was tenaciously held; and which, judged of in view of their surroundings, serve only to awaken sentiments of gratitude, and a generous charity toward differences, that have happily ceased to excite aught else than a magnanimous rivalry in extending the cause of our common Redeemer.

It may be well to relate in this connection another incident, one of several that have come to me of the same tenor, which puts the character of the excellent man to whose labors this church owes its origin, above much of the narrowness and bigotry, which we may believe were more common then than now. On one of his rides over the parish, he fell in with a zealous pioneer missionary of another denomination, who shared in part his territory. As they met in a piece of woods, both on horseback, the good elder threw out the challenge after this manner: "I suppose, Mr. H., you think your church right and the Baptists all wrong!" "O, no," was the reply, "I think we are wrong too." "Then why don't you reform?" "I would," said the Puritan, "if I knew where or how. Our churches are not like the Jewish temple, built perfect. They are formed, rather, after the manner of building a ship. The builder goes into a forest like this we are passing through, and selects his timber; but when brought to the yard it has all to be trimmed and fitted to build up the complete fabric."

It is evident that the time has arrived for considering the propriety of a separate church organization for this community. It had a population of about two hundred and fifty, and had taken (1805) the name of Auburn. Meanwhile the relations of Mr. Hig-

gins with the church of Aurelius were becoming unsatisfactory ; and in Nov. 1810 he tendered his resignation. In addition to the reasons of incompetent support and "a growing inattention to the word and ordinances," he assigns that of reluctance on the part of the people "to provide a house where worship can be performed and they can attend with propriety and safety." It appears that the Half Acre, being central to the four settlements within the parish, but without due forecast, had been selected as the site of the first church edifice. The building was enclosed in the autumn of 1809, and by a vote of the trustees opened for public worship in its unfinished condition. It was allowed to remain unplastered and without a permanent floor, owing to some difficulties that grew out of the financial management of the enterprise. Moreover a church had been formed at Sennett, 1806, which with the one formed in Auburn, changed materially the relative position of the site of the building, leaving it on the eastern boundary of the Aurelius parish, with surroundings, and a name¹ by no means suggestive of pious associations. Nothing more was done to render the house suitable for church purposes, and it was sold to Hezekiah Goodwin, one of the trustees, who converted it into a barn, after removing it, and attached it to his public house. Subsequently the united congregations of Aurelius and Cayuga built a stone church during the temporary ministry of Joshua Lane. In 1821, Medad Pomeroy, known and venerated in later years as Father Pomeroy, then just entered upon his long and useful ministry, was ordained pastor over the two churches, that of Cayuga having taken separate organization in 1819. The original church of Aurelius, owing to these repeated subdivisions of its first territory, became in 1834 the First church of Springport, now located in the village of Union Springs.²

Two months before Mr. Higgins' resignation, the initial step toward a separate organization here was taken at a meeting held

¹ Hell's Half Acre.

² Ten Presbyterian Churches now occupy the territory included in the original parish of Aurelius.

Sept. 17, 1810, at the Centre House, at which Bartholomew J. VanValkenburgh and Moses Gilbert presided, and John H. Cumpston acted as Secretary. Robert Dill, Silas Hawley, Henry Amerman, Moses Gilbert and Noah Olmstead were elected trustees under the corporate title of the First Congregational Society of Auburn, which has remained unchanged, though soon after the church adopted the Presbyterian form of government.

Major Van Valkenburgh was a patriot of the Revolution, having been in the battle of Bunker Hill, and several of the severest engagements of the war. He resided about two miles east of the village on lands received for his military services, and which were subsequently divided into farms occupied by his sons. His residence was the brick house still standing on the Walker place. In 1817 he became a communicant in this church by profession, which he honored by a well ordered and consistent life, until his death, which occurred August 4, 1831, at the age of seventy-eight years. It is related as an incident of La Fayette's visit to Auburn in 1825, where he was received with the enthusiasm which everywhere greeted him, that on alighting from the carriage at the Western Exchange, he at once recognized in the crowd on the piazza of the hotel, his old comrade the Major; and rushing up the steps caught the veteran in his arms and gave him a hearty kiss amid the cheers of the multitude.¹ His grandson, Gen. Robert B. Van Valkenburgh, whose record in the late war with the rebellion was worthy of his Revolutionary descent, was appointed U. S. Minister to Japan under the administration of President Lincoln, at the special request of Secretary Seward, not more in recognition of his loyal services than as a tribute of personal regard for the memory of the venerable patriot whose name he bore.

Moses Gilbert, the associate presiding officer at the formation of the society, was a farmer residing out of the village, towards Throopsville. His wife was one of the original members of the church. He became a communicant in 1814, and four years af-

¹ Hall's History of Auburn.

terwards was chosen ruling elder, but, declining to serve, was not ordained. He died April, 1823.

John H. Cumpston was an energetic business man from Schoharie county in this State, and built the first store of the village on the east side of North street near Genesee. He took an active interest in the building of the first church edifice, to which he was one of the leading contributors. His death occurred the year the house was commenced, 1815, and when but thirty-six years of age.

Robert Dill, the first name on the list of trustees, removed from Newburgh to this place in 1806, and at one time was its largest landholder. He was moreover one of the most public spirited men of his day. His gift of five acres of ground secured the establishment of the academy in 1812, now the Auburn Academic High School. His active and useful career was cut short by death, as he was reaching the prime of life. He died Jan. 24, 1813, in the forty-seventh year of his age, a little more than two years after the society was formed and only seven years after he came to Auburn, to the material and moral welfare of which he so largely contributed.

Silas Hawley was from Paulet, Vt., coming here in 1803, when he built the first carding mill on the outlet, just west of Hardenbergh's mill seat. He also had a tannery on Genesee street, where the Baptist church now stands, and adjoining Jeffrey's chair shop where Brigham Young, the Mormon leader, worked at his craft. Though of defective education, he was a man of strong native sense; also of industrious, frugal habits, and of active piety. The first religious movements here were very much under his guidance. He was one of the original three male members of the church; was chosen one of its first two elders, and also served as its first deacon. He removed to Rochester in 1824; was chosen an elder in the First Church, and took part in the formation of the Brick Church, of that city, as one of its original twenty-five members, and was one of its first elders. He died in Rochester Dec. 20, 1860.

Henry Amerman first settled in Owasco, about the year 1798,

but soon after removed to this place, and opened the "Farmer's Inn," just below John street on Genesee. He subsequently purchased the tavern stand occupied for a while by Silas Hawley, and located near the bridge which crossed the outlet.¹ He is the only one of the men of this early time of whom I can speak from personal knowledge. It was my privilege to visit him several times in the latter years of his life, when he resided in an adjoining town, and derive from him while his memory was still vigorous, much of the early history of the times in which he bore a prominent part. He was now the only survivor of the little company that first met for religious worship in the red school house, and remembered well the first service Mr. Higgins held there, which was at his invitation. He took a leading part in the establishment of the first Sunday school on this ground in 1817, and with special reference to the colored people,² having as one of the trustees of the school district been outvoted in his attempt to secure for this class the privileges of the common school. He was one of the most interesting old men I ever met, bright, cheerful and full of reminiscence. He served this church in the eldership from 1817 to 1823, when he removed his residence to the town of Brutus, where he died April 1, 1872, aged ninety-four years.

Immediately on the organization of the society, a subscription paper was circulated for the support of Mr. Higgins for one year, amounting to nearly five hundred dollars, from seventy-four subscribers, in sums from forty dollars down to twenty-five cents. At the same time, the trustees put in circulation a subscription to

¹ In an advertisement, under date of January 8, 1817, he holds out the following inducements to patronize his house: "From its central position, its large accommodations and his assiduous attention to the care of those who call upon him, he hopes to merit the favors of his friends and the public generally. *No noisy rabbles will be allowed a place in his house, whereby the rest of the weary may be disturbed.* Liquors and other refreshments of the first quality will be furnished." At a later date the public are notified that the sale of liquors will be restricted to travelers in need of the same.

² The following notice from the village barber, a colored man, in the "Advocate of the People," under date of Feb. 10, 1818, evinces in a practical way his interest in the movement: "NOTICE. The subscriber would respectfully state to his customers, that as he wishes to attend Sunday School, he will wait on them on Saturday until 9 o'clock P. M., and on Sunday morning until school commences, and *not after*. ALBERT HAGERMAN.

purchase and enclose an acre and a half of ground for a burial plot, which was the commencement of North street cemetery.

Mr. Higgins, his pastoral relations with the church at Aurelius having been dissolved Jan. 8, 1811, was now able to devote his whole time to this immediate field. For several years he had resided in Auburn, having purchased a place at the west end of the village, afterwards the residence of Nathaniel Garrow. It was nearly a year after the society was formed, before a church organization was effected, the account of which together with the considerations that prompted the step appears in the records, over the signature of Mr. Higgins, as follows: "The propriety and importance of an establishment of this nature having been a subject of frequent and serious consideration among a number of individuals, who were solicitous that it might be effected; and having sought, from time to time, divine direction in a measure of so great moment; having often conversed together on the essential subjects of experimental and doctrinal religion, and having agreed on certain articles of faith and practice to be adopted by them as members of a Christian church, the following persons did on the Lord's day, July 14, 1811, come together at the time of public worship, openly acknowledge and mutually profess the succeeding articles of the Christian faith, renew their covenant with God, and unite in a relation together, viz: Daniel Herring, Silas Hawley, Oliver Lynch, Eunice Higgins, Sarah Gilbert, Betsey Tyler, Rachel Parker, Sarah Hawley, Anna Cogswell. (Here follow the articles of faith and the covenant.) After publicly propounding the foregoing articles and covenant to the aforesaid persons, and they assenting; and administering baptism to Mr. Oliver Lynch, who had not before been baptized, they were declared to be a regular church of Christ, and entitled to all the privileges and ordinance of his visible kingdom."

The following Sabbath, the Lord's supper was administered, and the names of Dolly Hyde and Mary Herring were added to the roll; and soon after those of Horace Hills, Hannah White, Rachel Phelps, William Brown, Catherine Van Valken-

burgh, Charity Rogers; and the first year of its organization, the church consisted of seventeen members. In August of the same year, it was taken under care of the Presbytery of Cayuga, then recently formed and having held its first meeting at Auburn, Jan. 8, 1811.

Mr. Higgins remained with the congregation here until February, 1813, when he accepted a call from the church in Bath. His arduous labors and large usefulness for the eleven years of his ministry in this town drew from his brethren of the Presbytery of Cayuga, of which he was one of the original members, a warm expression of their regard for his eminent services, and personal regret at the separation. His pastorate at Bath continued eighteen years, and at its close was crowned with a precious revival which resulted in the hopeful conversion of some fifty souls. He continued to preach in the neighborhood as opportunity offered; and statedly supplied the church at Painted Post, which under his labors was blessed with a gracious outpouring of the Spirit. After his removal to Norwalk, Ohio, in 1835, now seventy-four years of age, he regarded himself too far advanced in life to assume another pastoral charge; but owing to the scarcity of ministers in that region, he preached most of the time for several years longer, supplying the pulpit for stated periods at Norwalk and other places in the vicinity. Thus he remained in the harness to the very close of life. On the Sabbath, June 18, 1842, having attended the morning service, and not feeling as well as usual, he concluded to remain at home in the afternoon, and, while sitting in his arm chair with his head resting on the study table, he expired without a struggle, or any of the ordinary signs of approaching death. He had passed the eightieth year of his age, and was in the fifty-fifth of his ministry. The funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Alfred Newton, pastor of the church at Norwalk, from the appropriate words: "And Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him." In a series of resolutions adopted by the church in that place, his death is spoken of as depriving the church of its counsellor and friend, and society of one of its useful and exemplary members;

and it is added: "we shall long remember his many affectionate counsels and instructions both from the pulpit and house of prayer, and we trust that his holy example may ever serve to lighten our path." As a further tribute of regard, the church defrayed the expenses of his funeral and erected a monument over his grave, which bears this inscription: "*As a preacher he was solid and instructive; as a pastor devoted and faithful; as a Christian consistent and humble.*" His venerable widow, who had shared the toils and privations attendant upon his ministry of more than half a century, and who survived him, was a descendant on her father's side of Matthew Gilbert, of the original colony of New Haven, and mentioned by Dr. Leonard Bacon as "one of the seven pillars" of the first church and civil organization of the town.

Mr. Higgins was a native of Haddam, Ct., born August 6, 1761, and was fifteen years old at the time the colonies declared their independence. He entered Dartmouth College in 1781, two years before the close of the war; but finished his collegiate course at Yale, where he graduated in 1785. While at Dartmouth, he contributed largely to his support by his own labor, and was accustomed to say that the two years he spent there were among the happiest of his life. He studied theology with Drs. Smalley and Lyman, men of mark in their day; was ordained pastor at North Lyme Oct. 17, 1787, two years after his graduation from college, and continued in this pastorate until 1802, when he was dismissed to enter upon his labors here. He was an earnest and active promoter of education, and took a prominent part in the establishment of the Auburn Academy, contributing generously to its funds, and was one of the board of trust into whose hands the property was committed, before the permanent organization. He was a man of cultured manners, of commanding presence, genial, and occasionally humorous, in social intercourse; and was a fine specimen, both as a preacher and a man, of the culture and habit of the generation which immediately succeeded the fathers of the republic, and by whose spirit of patriotic devotion and religious zeal it was so largely animated. His name is associated with the earliest efforts to lay here the foundations of

piety and intelligence, and cannot fail to be cherished by this church, which he gathered and organized, with gratitude and veneration.

The church has now (1813) a roll of twenty-seven members, twenty-three of whom are women. Of the four men, besides Silas Hawley, of whom I have already spoken, Horace Hills and William Brown are intimately associated together in the early enterprises of the congregation and its later history. They came to Auburn about the same time; connected themselves with the church at the same communion season; were chosen to the eldership the same year, 1820, and served each a period of ten years, until the Second Church was formed—a movement in which they may be said to have taken the lead. They were both prominent also in the establishment of the Theological Seminary, and were in its first board of trustees, the latter its secretary for a period of fourteen years.

Mr. Brown came to this place from Catskill, a lawyer of reputation, after having been for a while in the ministry. He was a man of liberal culture, sound judgment, remarkable self control, of well known religious character, and stood in the front rank of the legal profession in this part of the State. He removed to the city of New York in the latter part of the year 1834, and united with the Bleecker street church, then under the pastorate of Dr. Erskine Mason. His death occurred at Brooklyn, March 10, 1854, in the eight-fourth year of his age.

Mr. Hills was a merchant from Hadley, Mass., and with an older brother, Eleazer, established here a business firm the year before the church was formed; and it is interesting to note that in the several subscription papers for the support of the gospel, the erection of the First Church edifice, and the founding of the Seminary, their names are invariably together and always opposite liberal amounts. Eleazer Hills, like David Hyde, David Horner, John H. Beach, is to be mentioned as a representative of a class of sterling men who though not communicants, have until now given to the church, in the management of its secular interests, their gratuitous and invaluable services. Horace Hills was

the president of the first missionary society formed in Auburn, in 1815, composed mainly of young people, and which at its formation consisted of nearly one hundred members. He was for ten years the careful and accurate clerk of the session, and in many directions exercised a large and deserved influence in the social and religious movements of the place. He removed to Binghamton in 1840, and subsequently resided in Buffalo, where he died Sept. 18, 1873, at the age of eighty-six years. During his residence in Buffalo, he became a communicant in the Episcopal church, in the ministry of which his two sons¹ had entered; but continued to cherish a warm regard for his earlier associations, and a deep interest in the welfare of the two churches of Auburn with which he had been so closely identified.

The congregation at the opening of the year 1813, has received some valuable accessions whose influence upon its spiritual welfare is to be felt in years to come. The academy, a fine three story brick building, has been erected on its ample lot. Auburn has been made the county seat, and the court house a respectable wooden structure of two stories with the jail and jailor's apartments on the first floor, is already built, offering in its second story a commodious place for religious worship until the new church edifice, which begins to be talked of, is secured. The immediate necessity, however, is a suitable pastor. A subscription has been circulated for the salary; and April 16, 1813, the congregation are prepared to extend a call to Hezekiah N. Woodruff, who had been for nine years pastor at Aurora, then in the town of Scipio. The pledge for his support is cautiously worded, viz: "That we will to the utmost of our power endeavor that the sums of money subscribed to this end, and such as shall hereafter be subscribed for the same purpose, shall be collected and paid over to him agreeably to the stipulations contained in the call of the trustees."

The pastor elect withheld his reply for some two months; and in his letter finally accepting the call, after expressing his "astonishment at the providence of God by which the event has been

¹ George Morgan Hills, D. D., and Horace Hills, Jr.

accomplished," and the hope "that it may be for the divine glory," and their "mutual spiritual advantage," intimates his fears that the provision made for his support "will not be fully adequate to free him from worldly care and embarrassment." Nevertheless he is "induced to accept the call from the following considerations:" That the earth is the Lord's, and he giveth it to whomsoever he will, and is able to supply all my needs: That the church and congregation are young and although in a growing, flourishing condition, yet many heavy burdens and expenses must be upon them which I should be happy to alleviate; and also that I feel full confidence in the trustees that if at any time it should not be found adequate, they will make use of such means and devise such measures from time to time, to the utmost of their abilities, as will make me comfortable and happy, while I endeavor to convince them that I am willing to spend and be spent for them, and am not seeking theirs but them; and should I be called in divine providence to attend to some worldly business, to visit my friends which are at a great distance, and which may require my absence a few Sabbaths, I hope that the spirit of love and forbearance will be exercised toward me; and that the God of love and peace which brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, will be with us and bless us through Jesus Christ. Amen."

The installation took place June 22, 1813. The pastor elect preached the sermon according to an ancient ecclesiastical usage in New England, and received the charge together with the people from Levi Parsons, already some years at Marcellus where he spent a long and honored ministry. Francis Pomeroy, then at Sennett, and afterwards at Lyons ten years, and Seth Smith, who maintained his wise and useful pastorate at Genoa for thirty-nine years, were also present and took part in the exercises.

It was somewhat more than a year from the settlement of Mr. Woodruff, and after a considerable discussion, that a change in the form of government of the church was determined; and at a meeting held in the court house, August 15, 1814, "it was unanimously resolved to adopt the Confession of Faith and

Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, as the standard of faith and discipline." At the same time, Silas Hawley and John Oliphant, who had united with the church the previous year, were chosen ruling elders, and were ordained the following December—the former being also set apart to the office of deacon.

Mr. Oliphant was a native of the city of Carlisle in the north of England. He removed to London in 1789, when about eighteen years of age, and soon after united with the church worshipping in Silver street chapel, under the rectorship of Thomas Wills. He often attended, while residing in London, the preaching of Rowland Hill, and was an enthusiastic admirer of the man, because of his consecrated life and the doctrines he inculcated. At one time he entertained the design of entering the ministry, as a foreign missionary. Soon after his marriage, in 1795, he changed his purpose; and becoming an earnest republican, and a member of the London Corresponding Society, fears for his personal safety added to his alarm for the country, led him to America. He came to Auburn in October, 1811, one month after landing in New York. Soon after coming here, he was greatly humiliated in view of his departures from God, and passed through an experience which he describes, in his autobiography, as a second conversion. He found in Mr. Higgins what he had lost in his spiritual father, the good Mr. Wills, who died previously to his leaving London; and became in his new relations here thoroughly settled in the faith and practice of the gospel. So tender of conscience was he, and so thoroughly frank and honest, that he would promptly acknowledge any mistake or error he may have committed; and such was his reverence for divine truth that he was ever ready with its application to his own case, and to the full extent of its claims upon him as a follower of Christ. He measured all preaching, both of doctrine and practice, by the Bible; and this was eminently characteristic of his opinions and judgment of men and methods. On being asked what he thought of Mr. Finney, the first Sabbath the renowned evangelist preached in Auburn, he replied—"I determined to go with

him as far as he took the Bible with him ; and now he has killed me ! He has killed me with the Bible ! ”

He was, moreover, a man of simple habit, a tailor by occupation, of scrupulous integrity, quaint in his sayings, some of which are current to this day, and of good report among all his neighbors. He was greatly beloved and trusted in the church as one of the most judicious and godly of its spiritual officers. The poor and afflicted were familiar with his kindness and sympathy. His experience of divine things attained uncommon clearness and depth ; and his habitual frame was unworldly and spiritual. He has left the deep impress of his influence upon the church he loved so well, both in word and life, and the estimate in which he was held can hardly be exaggerated. While lingering on the verge of life, and certified in his own impressions of the very day he was to depart, his anxiety that nothing should be left undone by him for the good of others, led him to prepare addresses to his fellow members of the session, to the church, and also to his unconverted neighbors, to be read at his funeral. The request was complied with, in the presence of a large concourse of citizens, and gave a singular impressiveness to the occasion. He died Dec. 28, 1831, in the sixtieth year of his age.

The changes that had occurred in the board of trustees since the society took corporate form, brought to its management such men as David Hyde, John Oliphant, Horace Hills and David Horner.

David Hyde, who was here with his heroic mother as early as 1808, thirty years after their escape from the horrors of the Wyoming massacre, was in many respects the most influential man of the village. He was a lawyer of note, and in 1817 was appointed by DeWitt Clinton first Judge of the county, and on declining the honor, it is said, suggested the sterling name of Elijah Miller, who received the appointment. In common with the friends of an educated ministry, in this locality, he was active in securing the Theological Seminary at Auburn ; and became one of its first trustees, and its first treasurer. Though not a church communicant, he took his full share of the burden, then resting

upon the few, of sustaining religious worship and teaching; while there was no man in the community who, both by precept and example, was more inflexible in upholding the old fashioned morality, public and private; and this at a time in the history of the place, when such a stand was necessary to check strong tendencies in an opposite direction. His influence with young men, who were now being attracted here in considerable numbers, was most salutary. He was universally respected for his stern integrity and positive character; and as a firm and fearless man, he will ever be a conspicuous figure in the history of those early days. His death occurred in 1824.

David Horner, who was a native of Ireland, is remembered as an excellent and enterprising citizen, ready to favor every movement for the highest welfare of the village. He was a devoted friend of education, and earnestly seconded the plans of Robert Dill in founding the academy, contributing generously to its funds, and giving much personal attention to its management as a member of its board of trust. He was a man of no little polish of manner, courteous in his ways and upright in his life. He died in 1834, in the fifty-fifth year of his age.

It was in the year 1813, that the first attempt was made on this ground to organize Woman's work in missions; and a society was formed auxiliary to the Genesee Missionary Society, and accredited the first year with a donation of five dollars, the first contribution to the cause of missions from Auburn of which I find any record. Two years after, a young people's missionary society was established, and held quarterly meetings for the reception of missionary intelligence, with essays and addresses from the members. Its contribution the first year amounted to ten dollars and thirty cents, with an increase the next year to sixty dollars and twenty-five cents. Special interest was also manifested in the circulation of the Scriptures; and February 22, 1815, a year before the American Bible Society was instituted, Mr. Woodruff presided at a meeting held in the court house to form a county Bible Society, under the auspices of the Presbytery of Cayuga. This organization has been maintained to the

present time as the Cayuga County Bible Society, which in 1865, celebrated its semi-centennial anniversary with appropriate exercises. A tract society was also in operation about this time, and was continued for a number of years, with a thorough system of family visitation and personal effort, productive of great good.

But the principal mark of progress in connection with this development of benevolent activity, and taking into view the circumstances of the congregation, its greatest achievement, was the building of the first church edifice, which stood on this spot for more than half a century. It was commenced in the spring of 1815, the year Auburn was incorporated as a village, and was completed in two years at a cost of \$16,000, without a dollar of debt on the building at its dedication.

It would not be difficult to draw a picture of the village at the time the enterprise was undertaken. There were thirty stores and shops on Genesee street, then as now the principal business avenue, and the residences, at the west end, of Robert Dill, Nathanael Garrow and Eldad Steel. North street had a single store, a tannery, and less than a dozen dwellings, the first of which and nearest Genesee, was occupied by Horace Hills. Then came the frame dwelling built by Col. Hardenbergh at the junction of Market and Franklin streets, in place of the original log house, and for a number of years the family residence. Near by, on the corner of Garden street, was the house of Dr. Joseph Cole, still standing on the same spot. Passing Seminary street, where stood Esty's tannery, we come to the residences of Nehemiah Smith, on the hill, now marked by the row of venerable poplars planted by him; and of George Casey still farther to the north. There were scattered in Franklin street four or five houses, and a less number in South street, while all beyond the line of Washington street was an unbroken forest. Including the six public houses, with room for permanent boarders without incommoding travellers, and here and there a small dwelling not enumerated, we have Auburn as it was when the ground was broken for the church building. The lot, which, notwithstanding the expansion of the city, remains at its geographical centre, was the gift of

John H. Hardenbergh, as was also the larger portion of the ten acres comprised in the Seminary grounds. As the heir to the principal part of his father's original landed estate, he was noted for his liberality, not only in gifts, but for his whole policy and dealings, especially with his tenants and debtors, many of whom were of the laboring class struggling to obtain homesteads of their own. His Christian integrity, and unassuming beneficence perpetuate in honor the name indelibly associated with the origin of the town.

The plans for the building had been procured; the sum of \$8,000, half its cost, pledged to the trustees; the corner stone laid with appropriate ceremonies, and the entire work at quite an advanced stage, when the pastorate of Mr. Woodruff was brought to an abrupt close by one of those unforeseen liabilities to which this relation is at all times exposed. As the only instance of collision between pastor and people in the history of this venerable church, and from the peculiarities of the case, its singularity is a sufficient reason for giving it prominence in this narrative.

The request for the dissolution of the relation came from the congregation, and grew out of a bitter controversy, which greatly agitated the village, over an alleged homicide, the main point of dispute that divided public opinion being whether the man died of the blows inflicted by his assailant or from the surgical treatment he received from the attending physicians. Mr. Woodruff became involved in the affair, at the first, in the discharge of his pastoral duty, visiting the family of the deceased, and at the same time assisting, by request, in the examination of the body after death. This led to his being a witness at the inquest, and on the trial. In his testimony he happened to be mistaken at a point decided by the court to be quite material; and although, while the trial was in progress, he frankly acknowledged his error, it gave rise in the excited state of popular feeling to serious imputations cast upon his integrity, for which, however, there was no just foundation. The controversy took on several phases of excitement, and finding its way into the pulpit, the last place it should have invaded, hastened the crisis. In the paper sub-

mitted to the Presbytery, and signed by the prominent male members of the church with the five trustees, there is a full recital of the causes of dissatisfaction with the pastor, such as—"dry and unprofitable preaching, destitute in a great measure of energy and spirituality, lacking preparation and forethought"—"partizan zeal throughout the investigation of the judicial case"—"an affected display of physical knowledge with positive and dogmatic swearing on the trial"—and "preaching on the subsequent Sabbath in a spirit of wounded pride, and in a manner which implied a censure upon the court, the jury and the witnesses." For these and like reasons, it is alleged that "the influence of the pastor, with his usefulness, has so far declined, that his dismissal has become expedient." The Presbytery, after the examination of a number of witnesses, and a patient hearing of the case during a three days' session of the body, acceded to the request, August 29, 1816, on the ground of expediency, with a special minute, "that this action in no way affected the ministerial integrity of the retiring pastor." This was doubtless the wise course, all things considered; although at a later date, when the passions of the hour had subsided, it was plain to see and easier to acknowledge, the wrong on both sides. It is due alike to the history of this singular affair, and the ingenuous disposition of the man, to state that Father Oliphant, who was active in the movement against the pastor, subsequently took occasion to say that although prompted at the time by what he regarded as the true interest, he had nevertheless "acted in an unbecoming spirit."

Mr. Woodruff was soon after installed over the two churches of Herkimer and Little Falls. He was a native of Farmington, Ct., born in 1762, and received his education at Yale College, from which he was graduated in 1784. He was first settled in Stonington, Ct., where he was ordained pastor, July 2, 1789, eighty-seven years ago this day. Coming into this region as early as 1804, and after an experience of nearly twenty years in the ministry, he took a leading part in ecclesiastical movements and was held in high esteem by his ministerial brethren. His published sermons evince his ability and thoroughness as a preacher, and

but for the unfortunate incident connected with his dismissal, his entire record is that of a judicious, attentive and enterprising pastor. Perhaps his conservative tendencies, more particularly in respect to revival measures,¹ would have proved less adapted to the coming responsibilities of this position, than to the work of preparation by which his ministry here is to be judged. But, brief as it was, it proved a most interesting period in the annals of the congregation, which had now become settled in its polity, and with multiplied facilities, had fairly entered upon its career of prosperity. Moreover his pastorate embraced largely the period of the second war with England, during a part of which large bodies of troops passed through this village on their way to the frontier. This was also a favorite point for temporary encampment and rest after long marches. At times, this whole region would be thrown into excitement by the alternating fortunes of the war. The capture and burning of Buffalo spread terror through this part of the State. It was in the dead of winter, and as the news reached Auburn in the evening, the wildest alarm prevailed through the night. The military were ordered out, and prominent citizens hastened through the village collecting arms and ammunition; and the next morning two hundred men under command of Capt. Henry Amerman, were on the march toward Canandaigua in expectation of encountering the British who were reported on their way for the interior. It proved otherwise, and the company returned without meeting the enemy; but the turmoils and alarms incident to war continued to prevail until the return of peace. Under such conditions, and among a population of scarcely more than one thousand souls, it is rather a matter of surprise that so much was accomplished in the short time of Mr. Woodruff's pastorate. He remained in the active labors of the ministry for seventeen years after closing his work here; and died at Oneida, August 11, 1833, aged seventy-one years.

¹ This remark is based upon a fact communicated to me by an aged member of the church, who united with it under Mr. Woodruff's ministry, to the effect, that during the great revival at Owasco in 1816, in the pastorate of Rev. Conrad Ten Eyck, he was careful not to identify himself with it, though occasionally present at the meetings, but always declining to take part in the exercises.

The church was now entering its sixth year, with fifty-three members; and its new edifice, fifty-five feet in length and fifty-two in width, justly regarded at the time as a model of elegance and taste, nearly in readiness for a new pastor. The village was growing in numbers and importance, and much would depend upon the choice of a man to fill the position. No more fortunate selection could have been made than of Dirck Cornelius Lansing; and as the event proved it was manifestly of the Lord. A ministry of eight years at Onondaga, attended with signal success, had already given the young preacher distinction in this part of the country. He was only twenty-one years of age when he began his labors in that place; and within a circuit of twenty miles gathered his first church of thirty-five members. "Never was I happier," he writes in old age, "than when I used to skip like a deer through the woods from one small farm opening to another, to inquire if there were any in that bark covered log house who loved the Lord Jesus." His youthful zeal was rewarded with such growth in spirituality and numbers, that in a short time a colony went out from his original congregation and became a vigorous church in another part of the town; and before he left that field for this, a large portion of the thrifty and influential families of the place were brought into the communion of the church, a fine house of worship erected, and a high school (mainly through his agency) established.

At the time of receiving the call from this church he was temporarily supplying the pulpit of the Park street church in Boston, just after the pastorate of Dr. Edward Dorr Griffin, afterward President of Williams College, and regarded as one of the most eminent and eloquent preachers of his day. Dr. Lansing had already been solicited to settle in that city, and though reluctant to favor the invitation from Auburn, he consented to visit the church here, before deciding upon the overtures from Boston. The result of his preaching for a single Sabbath determined him. A peculiar solemnity attended the service and several conversions occurred. This was an intimation of the divine will not to be mistaken by such a man, whose whole aim was to win souls to Christ. He

accepted the call, December 1816, to enter upon his work the following spring; and accordingly returned, arriving in Auburn March 3, 1817, the day he was thirty-two years of age.

The new church edifice, now completed, was regarded, the journals of the time inform us, as the pride and ornament of the village, which could now boast of fifteen hundred inhabitants. It attracts unusual praise. Strangers and travellers speak of it as one of the most superb churches in the State. Hon. Simeon Dewitt, the Surveyor General, has seen it and pronounces it the best piece of architecture of the Corinthian order within his knowledge. It is deemed worthy of mention in the chronicles of the day, that the great bell which weighs 1,250 pounds has been raised and hung in its proper position, without accident—as the raising of the frame of the belfry and steeple the previous summer had been the talk of the town as a notable achievement—while the good people are reminded that “the spot on which this stately pile now stands was less than a quarter of a century ago covered with immense forests, the abode of the savage.” Indeed, we can hardly appreciate the estimate in which the attractive village sanctuary was held, much less the sacrifice by which its walls were reared among the humble dwellings of the people. Its cost, if equally distributed, would have been more than ten dollars for each man, woman and child of the entire population, and at least an average of fifty dollars to a family. The elaborate carving of the mouldings, columns and pilasters with their finely wrought capitals, even to the emblematic dove perched above the pulpit, was the slow and careful work of the hand; while every part, however hidden and obscure, was conscientiously finished. The building caught fire in the tower not long after it was dedicated, and narrowly escaped destruction. The fire was discovered before the flames had made much progress, and as the tradition goes, was extinguished with water boiling hot from the kettles of a hat shop directly opposite on the bank of the outlet. Dr. Lansing was absent at the time in attendance upon Presbytery. Elder Amerman had accompanied him, and on their return, first learning of the incident, hurried with the news

to the house of the pastor, who, on hearing of the narrow escape, was so overcome that he nearly fainted away. All honor to the fathers who put such esteem upon the worship and house of the Lord.

The dedication took place March 5, 1817. The day was bright; and as the doors were opened, half an hour before the appointed time for the services, the crowd that had gathered outside immediately filled the house. Dr. Lansing offered the prayer; and preached the sermon from 1 Kings, VIII: 27: "But will God indeed dwell with men upon the earth? Behold the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded." The discourse was published and contained such passages as the following: "Consequences of awful moment to our present and everlasting happiness—consequences, my bretheren, in which we this day are deeply interested, stand connected with every place devoted to the worship of God. The truths which from time to time will be taught in this house will be forming our characters either for happiness and heaven, or hell and misery. The redemption which is in Jesus Christ will here be offered to you; and it cannot be rejected but with infinite peril to your souls. Let then the first offering you bring to God be a meek and contrite spirit. Let your hearts rise in pure and fervent devotion to that Infinite Being, to whose honor and for whose worship, you have with so much toil and expense, reared this splendid and elegant edifice."

After recurring to their past difficulties and trials, and recounting the reasons for "the exercise of undissembled gratitude, especially for the union of sentiment and action which has marked the enterprise, and for the liberality of spirit that would do honor to any society with more extensive resources, all of which is from the Lord," he calls upon them "to ascribe to Him the glory, that He may open the windows of heaven and pour them out such a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." And concludes the whole with this petition, which has proved prophetic of the larger and better part of our history: "Bless with thy gracious presence, our Father, thy worshiping

people in this house. Appear for the conviction of sinners and the consolation of thy friends; and in the great day of adjudication let it be known that a multitude of sinners have been born in this house to immortal glory." Thus was struck the key note of the new ministry; while the rapid growth of the congregation in numbers and spiritual power dates from the occupancy of its first house of worship, six years after the church was formed.

The installation, preceded by a day of fasting and prayer, occurred on the 23d of the following April. The sermon was preached by the pastor's father-in-law, Caleb Alexander,¹ then principal of the academy at Onondaga.

The installing prayer was offered by Samuel Parker² of Danby, N. Y. The pastor received his charge from William Wisner, then at the commencement of his blessed ministry in Ithaca, and now one of the most honored names among the fathers of saintly memory. The charge to the people was given by Jephtha Poole of Brutus.

On the first Sabbath in May, and the second of the new pastorate, occurred the communion, when forty-five persons, constituting the entire membership at the time, partook of the Lord's

¹ Mr. Alexander was of Scotch ancestry; born in Northfield, Mass., in 1755; graduated from Yale College in 1777. In 1801 he came in to Western New York as a missionary of the Massachusetts Society, and divided his labors with the three churches of Salisbury, Norway and Fairfield. In the latter place he established an academy of which he subsequently became principal. He was influential in founding Hamilton College; was also one of the original and earnest friends of our Theological Seminary, and in 1820 became its general agent for the solicitation of funds. He died at Onondaga in 1828, aged seventy-three years.

² Mr. Parker came of Puritan ancestors noted for their piety and decided character. He was born in Ashbridge, Mass., in 1779, his father having moved in 1776 on a rough mountain farm among the Berkshire hills. He was graduated at Williams' College in 1806 and at Andover Seminary with the first class that went from that institution; was settled in Danby, N. Y., about fifteen years, when he went into New England as financial agent of the Auburn Seminary, at a period in the history of the institution when its existence depended upon what current collections could thus be obtained. In 1835, '36 and '37, he made an extensive tour of exploration beyond the Rocky Mountains, under the American Board; and the result was the establishment of several missions among the Indian tribes of that region. His great work, however, was in gathering congregations in Middle, Southern and Western New York, in the missionary service of the Massachusetts Society, in the earlier years of his ministry, and it is believed that he was instrumental, directly or indirectly, in establishing more than one hundred churches. Bold and decided, full of energy and resolution, and withal of scholarly attainment, he did the hard and too often unappreciated work of a pioneer of the cross. He died at Ithaca in 1866, aged eighty-seven years.

Supper. The duty of personal labor for the salvation of souls had been impressed upon the heart of the church, and a conference held to consider what could be done to advance the spiritual interests of the community. They had come to the unanimous conclusion, that as the professed followers of Christ, and in view of the solemn state of feeling existing in the congregation, they were called upon to make "a public declaration of their painful sense of unfaithfulness to the souls of their friends and neighbors." A document to this effect, prepared by the pastor and adopted by the church, was read at the morning service in presence of the congregation, as the members of the church arose and amid the tears of the entire assembly gave it their public assent.

It became evident in the evening of the same day that the work of God in unusual power had commenced. Dr. Lansing, in later years, and after his large experience in religious revivals, was accustomed to speak of that evening as the most memorable of his life. Let him describe it to us in his own words: "There was a solemn joy, and a joyful solemnity alternately swelling the hearts of God's people, while their tears of sympathy and of hope flowed over the deep agony and the irrepressible emotions of their friends, crying out after the manner of Pentecost, 'what must we do?' They went weeping to their respective homes. On my way from the church, I found several persons leaning upon the fences, accompanied by their friends, and weeping bitterly over their sins, and earnestly imploring the prayers of Christians on their behalf."

The next morning the members of the church met, as if spontaneously, and formed themselves into committees to visit from house to house. No sooner were the arrangements completed, than they were seen, two by two, passing from door to door, and communicating, as they met, the result. Here they would find one rejoicing in hope, and there another in the agonies of conviction. In a single instance two of the visitors, among the first ladies of the village, were treated very rudely by a neighbor, who, as they began to speak to her of her spiritual interests, be-

came very angry and lost all self control, when the good women, after a few words kindly spoken, took their leave. Their Christian gentleness, in contrast with her own rudeness, wrought such conviction upon her mind, that in a few days she came out a decided Christian. Immediately she sought the forgiveness of the friends she had treated so ill ; and the joy of that meeting is described as akin to that of the angels over the repentant sinner. The husband, who was an energetic, opinionated man, a loud talker, and at times quite profane, was also brought to yield to the power of the truth, and “almost with the suddenness of a miracle, became the personification of meekness, gentleness and love.”

Thus the work went on. Christians were filled with unwonted zeal, and the town was moved with the presence of God. Religion became the universal theme. Conviction was deep and pungent, and in most cases of conversion the work was short. The converts were zealous and bold for their new Master, and the revival was of such commanding power as to control, for the time, every interest—public as well as private.

Dr. Lansing in his semi-centennial sermon preached in 1856, and from which this account is largely derived, relates a striking incident connected with this revival, and illustrative of the time. Having in his early ministry been induced to unite with the Masonic fraternity in the hope of thus gaining access to some whom he could not otherwise reach, and as he had recently come to Auburn, he was invited by the lodge of Royal Arch Masons of the village, at that early day a large and influential body of the order, to deliver a discourse at the anniversary of St. John the Evangelist, which occurred on the 24th of June, and in the midst of the prevailing religious interest. The services were held in the church. As a part of the regalia, a richly ornamented cap was worn by each member of the order, with a broad band of blue ribbon across the front, bearing this inscription—“HOLINESS TO THE LORD.” With a skill and felicity of adaptation for which the preacher was so remarkable, he took the inspired motto for his text ; and with a solemnity which penetrated to the depths

of his soul, and with all the fervor of his characteristic eloquence, he pressed the sacred words in all their spiritual import as the most open avowal that could be made of supreme regard for the glory of God, and urged that the church of Christ could not make a more public and significant profession of devotedness to Him than this to which they were then giving their virtual assent. Reminding his brethren of the fraternity, that it was a time when the Lord was appearing in the beauty of his holiness and the power of his grace to convert sinners, he besought them to look honestly and seriously to it, that they did not disparage the gospel by a life incompatible with its holy requirements; and as they were now celebrating the anniversary of one of the best of the gospel saints, they should cultivate the same disposition and high regard toward the Lord Jesus as did their acknowledged patron saint, and remember that it only mocked Heaven to have "holiness to the Lord" inscribed on their caps, while their hearts were estranged from his love. With many such words, and with great sincerity and tenderness, did he entreat them never more to wear this sacred emblem of devotion to the most high God, until renouncing all sin, their hearts were filled with his love. The apostolic boldness and affectionate fervor of this appeal make the scene one of historic interest. It produced a profound impression, as we learn from the village papers of that date, and contributed greatly to the progress of the revival. Dr. Lansing himself says: "It pleased God to accompany the discourse with peculiar power. Many were pale with fear; while others wept under a conviction of their guilt and ruin; and the result was the hopeful conversion of a number of the fraternity."¹

Another scene occurred about this time, which illustrates a different phase of this remarkable revival. At an evening lecture which was very much crowded, the pastor was pressing the truth with his accustomed power and tenderness, when, in the midst of the discourse, many persons weeping and a deep solemnity pervading the assembly, there was a wild scream heard

¹ Semi-Centennial Sermon.

which startled from their seats the entire audience. It came from a woman, who had been observed for several Sabbaths as betraying in her countenance and manner a bitter opposition to the truth, and on one occasion, only a little before this, "had almost gnashed upon the preacher with her teeth." Instantly, and with a tone of authority he directed the people to sit down and not stir from their seats; and then requested the friends of the distressed woman to remove her—the house in the meanwhile one scene of convulsive sobs and tears. In a few calm words, the people were desired to go quietly to their homes, and say as little as possible of what had occurred; but that each in brokenness of heart cast himself at the feet of Jesus and prepare to meet God. The next morning the pastor was sent for, and found the poor woman sitting on a couch in the centre of the room, surrounded by weeping friends. The moment her eye fell on him she implored his forgiveness in beseeching tones; and on his assurance that he had nothing to forgive, and that the Saviour, whom both had abused, was merciful and would pardon, and by no means cast out any that come to him—she fixed her eye on the good man, and with a look of penitence which went to his soul, confessed how she had hated him worse than any creature in the world—worse even than a viper—and so bitter was her hatred, that she could have taken his life. With consummate skill and gentleness he succeeded in leading her thoughts away from himself to Jesus, whose love he assured her was infinite and whose compassion boundless, when they all knelt in prayer. It was not long before God graciously gave her the peace and joy of forgiveness; and in due time she was received into the church. "She was ever after," says Dr. Lansing, "an affectionate, humble follower of the Lamb, until called into his immediate presence, to unite with the countless hosts of his ransomed ones in the celebration of his heavenly praise."¹

During most of the summer of this year (1817), the pastor held, each Sabbath, three services in the church, and a fourth in the court house for the convenience of those residing in the west

¹ Semi-Centennial Sermon.

part of the village, presenting to the crowds attracted by his eloquence, as few men of his time were able to do, the sovereignty of God and the dependence of sinners in harmony with the duty of immediate repentance, together with motives drawn from the divine character and government, the nature and desert of sin, the frailty and uncertainty of human life and the solemnities of the future world. Conversions multiplied rapidly; and meetings of the session were held each Tuesday at three o'clock in the afternoon through the months of June and July, for the examination of candidates for admission to the church.

The first Sabbath in August was a memorable day. Not less than two thousand persons, it was thought, gathered in and about the church, at the communion service, from all the country around within a distance of twenty or thirty miles. The house was densely packed; and outside, there being as yet no fence about the building, wagons were placed side by side at the open windows, serving as a platform, from which large numbers looked in upon the solemn spectacle, as one hundred and forty-six stood up in the aisles and spaces about the pulpit, to make profession of their faith in Christ in presence of the emblems of his sufferings and death. A sacred awe rested upon the multitude as if penetrated with a sense of the divine presence, and the stillness and order becoming such a solemnity reigned throughout the wonderful scene. The revival continued through the autumn and winter; and the first year of Dr. Lansing's ministry the membership of the church increased from forty-seven to two hundred and seventy-two.

I have thought that this first revival, among the many with which this church has been favored, was the more important because of its educating power on the church, determining as it did for many years its character and methods of work; and also because of its influence upon the community at the period when its social and secular interests were most susceptible of right direction. That it had this twofold effect, there can be no doubt; and in this view its results, reaching far beyond its immediate fruits, defy computation. The church under its impulse took a

sudden and long stride in its progress, which it not only maintained, but from which it continued to advance, until in six years it reported a membership nearly as large as it has attained at any subsequent time. Indeed this first revival was but the beginning of a succession of similar refreshings with scarcely an interval of rest. They followed each other like showers in summer time, increasing the church in strength and numbers, and giving it prominence throughout the country as greatly favored of God. Thus in 1818, the year following the large accession, thirty-eight members were added. In 1819 there was a farther addition of twenty-seven. In 1820, there was an accession of ninety; and in 1821, we have the still larger number of one hundred and nineteen—in the four years, (including 1817) four hundred and seventy-five. The next four years the additions reached barely a hundred in all, when, in 1826, the date of Mr. Finney's first visit to Auburn, there were fifty-four new members enrolled, all but ten on profession of faith. This was the first and only season of special religious interest during Dr. Lansing's ministry here, in which the aid of an evangelist was sought. It was moreover about the time when the Nettleton and Finney controversy was culminating; and when a strong opposition had sprung up in this part of the State, and that from formidable quarters, against the doctrines and measures of Mr. Finney. He has left in his autobiography, recently published, an account of the mental struggle through which he passed at the threshold of his first labors in Auburn, in view of the obstacles which confronted him on every side and closed against him the confidence and Christian sympathy of large and influential sections of the country. Thus hedged in, he tells us, he saw no deliverance but from God to whom he looked day after day to show him the path of duty and give him grace to ride out the storm. The vision came, while shut up in his room and on his knees in prayer, with a sense of God's presence which filled him with unutterable awe and trembling, succeeded by an unwonted uplifting of soul with the assurance of help and strength for his work. All fear with all unkindness of feeling went from his mind; and thus re-assured he

re-entered the field, leaving results with God.¹ Thus he passed the crisis of his life as an evangelist; and though the revival here which immediately followed upon this experience, was less fruitful in additions to the church than several of previous years, some interesting conversions occurred and individual Christians were much quickened and established in grace.

It was in 1817, and in immediate connection with the revival of that year, that the first steps were taken in Sabbath School work, followed ten years after by the establishment of the Prison Sunday School, the first in any penal institution in America, if not in the world. The history of our own Sabbath School, so interwoven with that of the congregation, deserves larger space than can be given it in this discourse, and is now being prepared by the present superintendent, and will be given in another form.

These earlier years are fraught with events the importance of which could hardly have been anticipated by the men who took part in them, gifted as they were with the foresight and energy to plan and execute far beyond the needs of their own time. If they made any serious mistakes the record of them has not come down to us. What they undertook they appear to have accomplished; and though the church was the centre about which their sympathies and labors gathered, these were by no means confined to its immediate interests, exacting as, at times, these interests were of toil and sacrifice. Thus it was early in the year 1818, that measures were taken to establish a theological seminary in this locality. It had been for some time a cherished idea with Dr. Lansing to secure for this section and the growing west such an institution. While at Onondaga he had entertained the project and sought to enlist the action of presbytery in its behalf, the same year (1812) that the seminary at Princeton was opened; but the current of sentiment favored the establishment of one central institution for the whole church, and this had determined the action of the General Assembly in locating the same at Princeton. But having now matured more fully his plans and anticipated the objections that might arise, Dr. Lan-

¹ Autobiography, pp. 193-194.

sing opened his views to a few friends and particularly to several of the prominent and liberal men of his congregation whose confidence and co-operation he secured. The next step was to obtain the necessary ecclesiastical action; and accordingly the Presbytery of Cayuga at its meeting in Auburn, January 1818, resolved that it was expedient to establish a theological seminary within the bounds of the Synod of Geneva, and that they would prosecute the subject before that body at its meeting to be held the following month. The proposition was at the first received with no little surprise on the part of many members of the Synod, and encountered considerable opposition; but after a discussion, lasting two days, it was resolved to lay the matter before the General Assembly for its approval. The Assembly declined an opinion on the ground that the synod were the best judges of what should be done on their own field in an enterprise of such importance. It was determined by the synod after due discussion to establish immediately a theological seminary to be located at Auburn, provided that the sum of thirty-five thousand dollars, and ten acres of land should be secured by the citizens of Cayuga county previous to its meeting to occur in the winter of 1819. The terms were complied with and the location fixed at Auburn. It is not difficult to trace this result to the forecast and skilful management of Dr. Lansing, aided as he was by the powerful advocacy of such men as Dr. Wisner, President Davis of Hamilton College, and Miles P. Squier, one of the most earnest friends of liberal education in this part of the State. Much was due also to the congregation who steadily seconded the views of the pastor. Besides a large part of the lot, nearly half the requisite sum to be raised within the county, was its contribution, and this only two years after the building of the church, which had required extraordinary effort. It is in such ways that a congregation attests a liberal and enlightened policy, in promoting the kingdom of Christ.

It is more than a coincidence—it is history repeating itself—that just after we had completed our present church edifice, and by no common strain on our resources removed the last dollar of

debt, which hung like a cloud over our future, this congregation added a gift to the Theological Seminary of eighty thousand dollars, when its removal was threatened from the spot where the liberality of the fathers had located it; and that as the amount originally given by the congregation to locate the seminary here just about equalled the cost of the first church edifice, so the later sums it has given to sustain the institution and enlarge its permanent funds, fully reach one hundred and forty thousand dollars, the cost of this building; making an aggregate amount for seminary and church of two hundred and eighty thousand dollars, nearly one third of which, or more than eighty thousand dollars, is the munificent gift, in nearly equal amounts for each, of two of our number, whose well known names¹ need no mention on this occasion to be held in lasting gratitude among the sacred and joint memories of the First church and Auburn Theological Seminary.

We may not estimate the advantages that have come both to the Seminary and the church through the intimate relations which have been maintained between them for these fifty-five years. But we may recall with gratitude and veneration the legacy which as a people we share in the memories of the great and good men who have occupied chairs of instruction in this school of the prophets, and seats, as worshipers together with us in the sanctuary and the circle for social prayer: Richards, Perrine, Mills, Condit² all from New Jersey, the State which gave the first missionaries to this field when a wilderness, all men of rare and

¹ Sylvester Willard, M. D., and Theodore P. Case.

² Dr. Jonathan B. Condit was born in Hanover, N. J., Dec. 16, 1808; graduated at College of New Jersey, in 1827, and at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1830. He was ordained pastor of the Congregational Church of Long Meadow, Mass., July 1831, where he remained until 1835, when he entered upon his duties as Professor of Rhetoric in Amherst College, continuing in the same until 1845, when he became pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Portland, Me., until 1850, when he accepted the professorship of Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology in Lane Theological Seminary. From there he was called to the same chair in Auburn Theological Seminary in 1855, which position he occupied for a period of nineteen years, receiving on his retirement in 1874 the title of Professor Emeritus. He supplied the pulpit of this church for a year after the resignation of Dr. Henry A. Nelson in 1856, and until the installation of the present pastor in November 1857; and with one or two exceptions, occupied the pulpit annually during the pastor's vacation, including the summer preceding his death, which occurred January 1, 1876, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.

special gifts for the positions they filled, and now all gathered to their fathers with every token of respect and honor the church is wont to bestow upon her most faithful servants. There are still others who have gone from us, and are yet among the living, who remember with interest their associations here, and are remembered with unabated affection. And one still abides with us, who at the end of a long and honest service, gracefully resigns,¹ in his old age, his task to younger, but whoever may fill the vacant chair, not to more faithful hands; and now after nearly a quarter of a century in which he has made this church his spiritual home, is only awaiting the call of the Master to come up higher.

During Dr. Lansing's ministry there were chosen at different times, thirteen ruling elders—Henry Amerman in 1817; William Brown, Horace Hills, Conrad Ten Eyck, in 1820; Lemuel Johnson, in 1821, who the same year removed to Buffalo and served the First church in that city for a number of years in the same office; Richard Steel, Jared Foote (who took part in the formation of the Second church of which he was also an elder;) Stephen Hamlin, in 1824; Theodore Spencer, Clark B. Hotchkiss, Esek C. Bradford, Myron C. Reed, Erastus Pease, in 1827. Of this number, and of the session as it was in Dr. Lansing's time, the only survivor is Richard Steel, who, in his eighty-first year, still remains at his post in the active discharge of its duties, and is more thoroughly identified with the history of this church than any other person now living, having taken a prominent part in its events, especially in the revivals which have marked its progress, from 1817 until the present time.

Of those enumerated above, two only died while in office, Conrad Ten Eyck and Myron C. Reed. Mr. Ten Eyck was the son of Rev. Conrad Ten Eyck of Owasco, whose ministry in that place was signalized in 1816 by a revival of religion which in a single year added three hundred and fifty-one persons to the churches of Owasco and Sand Beach, then under one pastorate.

¹ Dr. Edwin Hall resigned his professorship of Christian Theology, May 1876, after a service in this position of twenty-one years.

He moved to Auburn in 1817. Though abounding in deeds of kindness to the poor and of consolation to the afflicted, he was silent of his own works, ever preserving a humble estimate of himself. He was the most intimate associate of Father Oliphant, and of the same choice spirit. As the son of a clergyman and with a mind of more than ordinary quality, he improved his opportunities for mental culture not only, but for theological knowledge, and became possessed of larger and more thorough views of the principle doctrines of the gospel than was common. He was a friend of revivals and a diligent worker in them. For a while he was in active business as a merchant, but afterward taught a select school, as more congenial to his cultivated habit, and doubtless with the prospect of larger usefulness. He died Nov. 6, 1826, in the thirty-ninth year of his age. His last words to his now venerable widow, who has survived him almost fifty years,¹ were "*God will do right.*"

Myron C. Reed was a merchant of considerable experience in business, before coming here, and of the class largely reached in the revival of 1817, of which he was one of the converts. Whatever he undertook he did with his might. He was an ardent politician and an earnest Christian, equally sincere in his politics and his religion. He was always in earnest, naturally impulsive, with a strong sense of what was just and right, and an outspoken courage which none could fail to respect. He may not always have ruled his own spirit, and doubtless sometimes did what a less impetuous spirit would have led him to avoid; but his frank and generous nature would atone for an error as promptly as it was committed. He was as fearless in the rebuke of wrong as he was mighty in prayer—a most useful man in his place, and one whose faults are quickly forgotten, but whose virtues imprint themselves indelibly on the memories of men. He died February 3, 1843.

¹ Since the above was written, this excellent woman, so long identified with the social and religious life of Auburn, has departed this life. She died at the residence of her son-in-law, James R. Cox, August 16, 1876, in the eighty-sixth year of her age, having been a member of this church for a period of fifty-six years.

Stephen Hamblin, a farmer residing on the western border of the village was also a convert in the revival of 1817. He filled the office of deacon four years before his election as elder; removed to Seneca Falls in 1830, where he remained some two years; and returning to this church was one of a small colony to form, in 1840, the church at Aurelius,¹ located at the Half Acre, of which he was also an elder. He was an amiable and trustworthy man, of sincere and unquestioned piety, and died September 6, 1856, having come to a good old age.

Theodore Spencer became connected with this church by letter in 1823. The son of the eminent jurist Ambrose Spencer, and younger brother of John C. Spencer, distinguished at the bar of this State and in the public service, he naturally chose the profession of the law, and for the years he was in practice, attained a most promising reputation. But his religious tastes and activities, with a special fondness for biblical study, diverted him from his chosen calling, and he really became a preacher before leaving the bar. He was accustomed to hold religious meetings in the outlying neighborhoods, besides conducting a large Bible class here; and so manifest was the divine blessing upon his work in these directions, especially in a single district of the town where some sixty conversions occurred under his labors, that he could no longer mistake the path of duty. This was in 1828; and for some years he was an esteemed and successful pastor, until his health became so seriously impaired that he was compelled to retire from active duty. He resided in Lyons in 1848, on the place occupied by his father at the time of his death, and for some two years was a member of my congregation in that place. I became strongly attached to him, and found in him a wise counsellor, a generous parishioner and a most valuable helper in a period of extended religious interest, when many, particularly among the young, were brought through personal interviews with him, into a clear apprehension of the first principles of the Christian life. He removed from Lyons to Utica where he died in 1870, just after the semi-centennial anniversary of the Theo-

¹ Disbanded in 1870.

logical Seminary which occurred in May of that year. He had greatly desired to be present on that occasion, as expressed in a letter addressed to cherished brethren with whom he had acted in other days, and which touched many a chord of memory in its closing sentence : " I feel that I am lying at the river's brink, as Father Oliphant would say, ' waiting for the King's orders to go over.' "

Eseck C. Bradford, a deacon four years and an elder fourteen years, was here in 1821, uniting with this church by letter from Cooperstown. He had a carding mill, and built the house in Grover street better known to us as the residence of the late John Porter. He acquired a large business in his specific line of manufacture, too extended perhaps for his ability to manage, and became embarrassed, as the best of men sometimes will, with difficulties and perplexities the most trying of which to him was, that any should suffer loss on his account. He was, however, a worthy man whose upright intentions and Christian honesty were not doubted by those who knew him best, whatever limitations such misfortunes hardly ever fail to impose upon one's influence with his fellow men. He removed to Illyria, Ohio, in 1841, where the church chose him one of its elders. His death occurred shortly after his return home from a meeting of the General Assembly, which he had attended as a commissioner.

Erastus Pease was a member of this church for forty-three years, uniting by profession in January 1814. As a shoe manufacturer he had, as I have understood, the first prison contract in that particular business. He held the position of deacon for seven years previous to his service as elder. The names of his five children appear on our church register as proof of the fidelity of God to his covenant and the reward of Christian nurture. His son Lorenzo W. was converted in 1831, while a student at law in the office of William Brown, a year after his graduation from Hamilton College; entered the Auburn Seminary the same year of his conversion, and in 1834 went as a missionary to the Island of Cyprus, where he found an early grave. Four of the daughters became the wives of ministers. Deacon Pease was an unas-

suming, reticent man, whose quiet ways and noiseless piety may have restricted, somewhat, the circle of his influence; but in the sphere in which he moved he was truly a pattern both of integrity and godliness.

Clark B. Hotchkiss, at an early day, was a most reliable and efficient church officer. He never faltered, whatever the load put upon him, but in the parlance of the time "broke ground every step." He was a man of clear judgment, and positive convictions; and when he once took a stand he was as immovable as a rock. His usefulness in varied ways was marked and prominent, until business embarrassments broke in upon him, throwing him into a depressed mental condition, which sought relief in doctrines then coming into vogue, which promised the speedy and personal advent of Christ. Notwithstanding the eloud that came upon him, separating him from the church, it becomes justice rather than charity to remember the decided stand he was wont in better days to take for truth and righteousness, and not measure him by the reaction of a strong will, if not the aberration of a vigorous mind in its despondent moods.

In these several sketches I have endeavored to present, as accurately as the materials at my disposal would allow, the men entrusted with the rule and discipline of the church, its leaders together with the pastor, during a period of great spiritual prosperity. Diverse in occupation, temperament and gifts, they were of one spirit; and with equal fidelity, though with varied capacity, upheld the sacred interests committed to their charge.

Dr. Lansing after having been twice called to the Second Church of Utica, at length resigned his charge June 16, 1829. The work of twelve years with the intense excitement and solicitude which, at times, were upon him, demanded the relief that attends a change of place, though not absolute rest. This separation from a people to whom he was bound by so many cords of interest and affection was the most painful act of his public life and only yielded to, on the part of the congregation, as a stern necessity.

This was his longest pastorate, though it did not, by any means, prove the limit of his usefulness. At Utica, he found the church embarrassed by a formidable debt, and its edifice in need of repair, bringing into requisition first of all his well known tact and enterprise. Yet he does not lose sight for a moment of his ruling aim—the conversion of souls; and in the autumn of the first year of his ministry there, a revival commenced which, continuing for some eighteen months, added two hundred and fifty members to the church. From Utica, where he labored nearly four years in an almost continual revival, he removed in 1833, to New York and organized the Houston street church with thirty-five young people, and left it in 1835 with three hundred and eighty members. It was the only church during his whole ministry that enabled him to support his family from his salary.¹ His health failing, he returned for rest to Auburn in 1835 and remained here three years, during which, however, he preached in neighboring places, especially in connection with revivals. In 1838 he removed to Illinois, where in eleven months he organized a church in a pioneer settlement and secured for them a house of worship, the plans for which he prepared with his own hand. He afterward preached at Utica a few months, and at Syracuse for three years. In 1844 he supplied his old pulpit in Auburn for a year during the illness of the pastor, and enjoyed one more revival amid the scenes of his former ministry. In 1848, he became the pastor of the Clinton Avenue church, Brooklyn, where his work of six years was crowned with the erection of a fine edifice, still one of the ornaments of that city of churches. His last sermon was preached in the Vine street Congregational church of Cincinnati, the pulpit of which he had supplied for fourteen weeks. It was the second Sabbath in Dec. 1856, and on returning to his home, he remarked that he had preached for the last time. For somewhat more than three months he was confined with the disease that terminated his life. When a friend remarked to him that he had fought a good fight, and kept the faith, and that his sufferings would soon be exchanged

¹ Semi-Centennial Sermon.

for a crown, he looked up reprovingly and replied quickly: "A crown! a crown! don't speak of it. If I may find some humble place at the foot of the cross, it is all I ask. Oh, the infinite mercy of Jesus Christ!" When his voice had entirely failed, a friend asked him if his confidence in the Saviour was still strong. His face gleamed with a heavenly radiance while he looked up as if he almost saw Him, and then bowed his head. One began to repeat the verse—"Jesus, lover of my soul,"—when he took it up with the same glowing expression, forming the words with his lips, and like Stephen, looking steadfastly into heaven, fell asleep. Thus he died, at Walnut Hills, Ohio, March 19, 1857, aged seventy-two years. He was buried with his fathers in the Golden Hill cemetery near Lansingburgh, his native place, from which fifty years before he had gone forth, bearing a name of ancient and honored lineage, and with the advantages of mental and social culture that wealth affords, to serve the church of Christ as one of her pioneer missionaries, and win a fame better than of ancestral honors, and gather riches more durable than of landed estates.

It is not difficult to determine the secret of his power and success as a preacher and pastor. This was not so much in his gifts, rare and accomplished though they were, as in his complete consecration of himself to the direct and spiritual aims of an apostolic ministry. With an ardent and restless nature, and tastes which in youth sought gratification in scenes of aristocratic gaiety, preaching to save souls became his passion, and the society of the humble and devout of Christ's fold his delight. He well remembered not only the time, but the very spot where the light of hope beamed upon his soul. Such was his transport, that, to use his own description of the scene, it seemed as if the very heavens parted, pierced by a vast shaft of light to open to his vision the mercy seat of the Lamb of God. This occurred while he was a student in Yale College, and in the great revival of 1802; and so deeply engraven was the whole scene upon his memory that ever after in visiting his Alma Mater, he would go to the very spot in the college yard, to recall as far as possible

the melting emotions of that eventful moment when he turned his back forever upon the avenues of worldly ambition and sought the honor that cometh from God only.

The contrasts presented by individual lives are often as striking as between periods of history. In the same class at college with Lansing was a young man, his opposite in temperament, but not unlike him in logical and metaphysical tastes, pure in morals, but cold and reserved in manner, haughty and imperious in spirit, and, thus early in his career, ambitious of the highest honors of the republic. He rose to eminence and unbounded influence in his native State and stood among the foremost men of intellectual might in the Senate of the United States, as the champion of African Slavery, and the chosen spirit of that organized and aggressive sectionalism which, when it could no longer control, defied the national government; and at last drenched divided states in fraternal blood. In view of the life work of these two young men, graduating from the same college on the same day, I am willing to challenge a comparison between Dirck C. Lansing and John C. Calhoun, and without attempting to lift the curtain that conceals from human vision the awards of the last day, submit to the candid judgment of men, which was the nobler life, that of the ambitious statesman or the consecrated minister of Christ.¹

It was but once my good fortune to meet Dr. Lansing, and then at a casual interview in which he introduced himself by name with a grace and frankness quite characteristic of the man. I never heard him preach: but tradition has preserved much of his manner, as has the press the matter of his discourses. In every way he was a man after nature's best model. In symmetry of frame, in eloquence of speech, in balance of the intellectual and emotional, in clearness of argument and fervor of appeal he had scarcely an equal among his brethren.² Every thing spoke

¹ In the funeral discourse by Rev. J. P. Thompson, D. D., the contrast here suggested is presented much more at length; but as it was preached in 1857, the year of Dr. Lansing's death, the author could not anticipate the dire results, culminating in 1861, of the political creed of which Mr. Calhoun was the chief exponent.

² Historical Discourse by Rev. S. H. Gridley, D. D., at the Semi-Centennial anniversary of Auburn Theological Seminary.

as he kindled with his theme. His long, slender figure, the graceful sweep of his arm, the flash of his black eye, the winning tones of his voice, all combined to rivet the attention and compel the admiration of his hearers. He could read a hymn with marvelous effect; and sometimes pausing, would turn the book upon its face on the pulpit cushion and comment on what he had read, often with the most feeling and touching emphasis.¹

He was by no means a sensational preacher, as the term is now used, but had unqualified faith in God, in the power of his truth and the work of his Spirit. And this it was that made his ministry here and wherever he went so efficient. He was moreover as gentle and loving as a child, winning the young, and disarming opposition by his sincerity and unaffected humility, while there was born in him a courage and spirit of command that would have led a charge in battle. Had he been bred a statesman he would have swayed senates with the eloquence of a Clay; or had he been trained a soldier, would have rallied the broken and flying columns to victory with the dash of a Sheridan. Still he found scope for all his varied gifts and attainments in preaching the simple gospel of Christ during a ministry of fifty years, which it pleased God to crown with more than sixty revivals of religion.

We come now to another epoch in the history of the congregation. After such a pastorate the people will not be easily satisfied. Moreover the church edifice has been considerably enlarged, and a second church organized, lessening the membership sixty-six, and the congregation in a still larger proportion.

¹ From the personal recollections of Lewis Gaylord Clark, for many years associated in literary work with his brother Willis Gaylord Clark, especially in the editorship of the Knickerbocker magazine, and both natives of this county. He writes: "Dr. Lansing was the first really *live* preacher that I ever heard. Very crowded was the meeting house of our boyhood when it was known that Dr. Lansing was to exchange with our pastor. He was one of the most electrically eloquent preachers we ever heard—Bascom alone excepted. * * * His hymns were always selected with remarkable adaptation to the subject of his sermons. On one occasion a hymn written by my brother was sung in Washington Square (New York) by five thousand children, after having been read by Dr. Lansing. It was a proud moment for the writer when he heard those innocent voices sending up to heaven in one blended aspiration the burthen of his lines. Dr. Lansing's cordial praise of those lines upon the spot, their execution by so many children in that beautiful square on one of the loveliest of early summer days, was one of the writer's most cherished memories during life."

But in a year after Dr. Lansing left, during which the pulpit was supplied by the professors of the Theological Seminary, a call was extended to Josiah Hopkins of New Haven, Vt. The circumstances were somewhat singular. The name of Asa T. Hopkins, afterward pastor of the First church of Buffalo, had been favorably received, though as yet he had not been upon the ground, nor had any negotiations passed between the parties, when it so occurred that Josiah Hopkins passed a Sabbath here, on a journey west to visit friends. The impression was favorable and it was ascertained that he would consider a proposition from this church. In due time the call was made, and the whole proceeding on the part of the congregation was as cordial and satisfactory as if it had secured to them Asa, instead of Josiah as their pastor.

Dr. Hopkins was installed September 28, 1830. The sermon was preached by Dr. Wisner, still at Ithaca. Seth Smith offered the installing prayer, Levi Parsons gave the charge to the pastor, and John Clark the charge to the people. The population of the village, at this time, was a little more than three thousand, was supplied with five churches, and two of them Presbyterian. But within a year from the date of the installation two hundred and thirty-five were added to this church—four times the number it had given to form the Second church, organized November 1830, and which, within the same period, received an accession of nearly a hundred members. The next year, seventy were received into this church—still a larger number than had gone out to plant another church; and this too in a population scarcely one sixth as numerous as that which surrounds us to-day. It is one of the most instructive facts in our history; and prompts the question—if two Presbyterian churches made such vigorous growth side by side in a population of three thousand, ought there not to be ample room for the four of the same order we now have, among nearly twenty thousand people?

The revival of 1831, of which these were some of the fruits, was not restricted to place or measures. It filled the land with joy, and the churches unvisited by the gracious baptism were

the exceptions. In some localities, as in this, evangelists were employed. But similar results attended the means in ordinary use. The presence of Mr. Finney here, at the time, was quite undesigned. It so happened that he was passing through the village from Rochester, where an extensive revival had attended his preaching, with the intention of stopping over a day to visit his old friends who had stood by him in the days of 1826, and then proceed directly to New York. There were already the unmistakable signs of a great work of grace apparent, and extra meetings were being held at least every other evening. Mr. Finney preached a single sermon, and such was the desire on the part of many of the congregation, not members of the church, that he should remain, that a paper was hurriedly circulated by one of this number, and numerouslly signed—including some of the most prominent names in the community. It was after midnight when the petition reached Mr. Finney. He had retired early, and was expecting to take the stage at two o'clock in the morning, having paid his fare and secured his seat. He could not, however, resist such an appeal, and changing his purpose, consented to remain. There had been already a number of conversions, and it is remembered that with scarcely an exception those who signed the paper became subjects of the work.

Mr. Finney was now in the prime of life and at the height of his fame. Churches were every where open to him and very much of the opposition excited against him in 1826 had subsided. Many here who had arrayed themselves in open resistance to his measures then, were now friendly in their attitude. The opposition was mainly confined to the avowed enemies of religion, and was both noisy and malignant. It is scarcely credible at this day, which witnesses so complete a vindication of this and other revivals—but such was the bitterness of feeling on the part of some, that it would have hardly created surprise in those who knew the temper of the men, if violent and summary measures had been resorted to for ridding the town of Mr. Finney. Indeed one man, who was converted and united with this church, subsequently made the acknowledgment that he had formed the purpose to take the life of the preacher.

The work, however, went on with resistless energy. Mr. Finney preached twice each Sabbath, and on two evenings in the week. All the other labors in conducting the prayer and inquiry meetings devolved on the pastor and elders. Dr. Hopkins filled one of the three preaching services on the Sabbath. On the first or second Sabbath evening that Mr. Finney preached, such was the manifest power of the word that he called for those "whose minds were made up, to come forward, publicly renounce their sins, and give themselves to Christ." To his surprise, the first man that stepped out into the aisle was one who had exerted more influence than any other in opposition to the revival of 1826. He came forward promptly, followed by a number of those who had signed the memorial before referred to; and that evening there was such a demonstration made as to control public sentiment; and as Mr. Finney expresses it in his autobiography—"a wave of divine power swept over the community."

During his stay of six weeks in Auburn, in 1831, Mr. Finney preached in no other pulpit than that of the First church; but the results were by no means confined to this congregation. Many who ascribed their conversion to his instrumentality united with other churches in the vicinity; and some of these, it may be said, became pillars, through years of faithful service and holy living, in their respective communions. The whole number of converts, it was estimated, reached five hundred; and now after a generation has passed away and with it the prejudice of the time, there can be no question of the great service then rendered to vital religion. I need not appeal to the few that remain to speak of those days. The silent and impartial pages of our church register furnish unanswerable testimony to the stability and value of the large accession of 1831; and I now repeat what I had occasion to say some years ago, as the simple truth of history, that next to the cherished names of Lansing and Hopkins, in the earlier memories of the church, stands that of Charles G. Finney.

There were other and general revivals in 1833, 1838 and 1840, with large additions and considerable increase in the intervening

years. Thus in 1833, the number added was one hundred and two; in 1838, seventy-six; in 1840, sixty-eight, and in all from 1831 to 1841, seven hundred and eighty-five; which, by an interesting coincidence, is the precise number of the entire additions to the church from 1811, the year it was formed, to 1831, or the twenty years embracing the entire period of its history antecedent to the pastorate of Dr. Hopkins, these ten years of which may be properly styled its era of evangelism.

After Mr. Finney, came Jedediah Burchard (in 1833) whose peculiar methods had provoked severe criticism in other places, and had been attended with high excitement. None doubted his orthodoxy as a preacher, holding strongly, as he did, to the doctrine of the divine sovereignty, at the same time that he urged the duty of immediate repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, while every thing depended on the Holy Ghost in answer to wrestling prayer. He is said to have been quite unequal in his efforts, sometimes as solemn, tender and appropriate as could be desired; and then at other times he would have his audience convulsed with laughter. He was really an actor, graceful in motion, impassioned in utterance, tragic and startling, at times, in attitude.¹ This was regarded by many as affectation, and, with the more intelligent, reacted upon the preacher. Notwithstanding all this, the church, making less of these things for the sake of the truth, sustained him as a unit. At no previous time had there been such thorough and systematic preparation for united effort in the use of whatever instrumentality it might be thought best to employ. Even before Mr. Burchard came, and with scarcely any knowledge of his peculiarities, the members of the church had entered into a solemn pledge to work together without complaint or criticism, desirous only that the greatest good should be secured, in the salvation of the people. Hence the eccentricities of the preacher did less harm than might have been feared, while, doubtless, many were reached and saved through the truth, who otherwise would have remained indifferent. The revival was general and wide spread; and it is the tes-

¹ Half Century Discourse, Presbytery of Rochester, by Rev. Charles P. Bur^{sh}ard, D. D.

timony of the time, that as large a number from adjacent towns, drawn to the meetings by the reputation of the preacher, were converted as united with this church.

Five years afterward, in 1838, the pastor was aided by Mr. Avery, a less noted evangelist perhaps, but deemed more judicious, and judged by the number that then professed hope in Christ, not less effective. Of this number there are several that are now serving this and the Second church of this city as elders, or prominently connected with Christian work in other localities. Mr. Avery was followed in 1840 by Samuel G. Orton, who was converted at eighteen years of age, during a revival in connection with the preaching of Dr. Nettleton in Litchfield, Ct., his native town. His studies in theology were with Dr. Taylor of New Haven. Although a settled pastor for many years, he abounded in revival labors, and was ever ready to give a few weeks where his services were requested in the promotion of the good work. He appears to have combined in excellent proportions the zeal of the evangelist with the discretion of the pastor, and is remembered here, as in many other parts of western New York, with gratitude for his labors of love.¹

It is instructive in this review, to observe that in the diversity of gifts so manifest in these several servants of God, and the conflicting judgments formed, at the time, of their modes of work, there was a remarkable uniformity of result not less in the spiritual than in the numerical increase of the church. I have thought that the result might have been very different but for the stated ministrations of a pastor who taught the people knowledge; and as their trusted and responsible guide, kept his hand firmly on the helm and never left his post in charge of another, heartily as he was wont to welcome all serviceable aid from his brethren. It remains a fact, however, that this church owes to those days of palmy growth, much of its character and influence, its sinew and strength, for a generation. There may have been things done that had better been left undone. Still the truth abides through the ages, that God uses varied instruments to advance

¹ Funeral Sermon by Rev. Samuel D. Gregory, 1874.

his kingdom, and so orders the issue, that "wisdom is justified of all her children."

Dr. Hopkins served the congregation for a period of fifteen years and eight months with characteristic fidelity and great acceptance. Constrained by the loss of health, which a year's rest failed to restore, he resigned his charge April 21, 1846.¹ The church under his administration received nine hundred and seventeen members, five hundred and sixty of whom united on profession of faith. Of this entire number only sixty-two are now with us. The additional elders in his pastorate were James S. Seymour in 1832; Abijah Fitch; Theron J. Pond, who removed to Rochester the year after his election; Cyrus Lyon, who after a service of three years removed to Weedsport; Nathanael Lynch, who recently died in the village of Phelps; and John S. Bartlett, all of whom were chosen in 1836; and in 1843, Lewis Bailey, who removed the same year to Utica; Joseph B. Hyde; Horace Hotchkiss; and Jedediah Darrow, who removed to the village of Fulton in 1847, where he resided at the time of his death, which occurred when he was about seventy years of age. Dr. Darrow had been a deacon seven years before he entered the eldership. He was a man of liberal education, and very intelligent on subjects outside of his profession, of which he was an esteemed member. His age and experience, with an earnest consecration, justified the confidence reposed in him by the church and his associates in office.

Mr. Bartlett was a younger partner in a large mercantile busi-

¹ In his letter of resignation he says: "It is now almost two years since I have been able to perform all the duties of a pastor; and although the congregation have manifested great kindness and liberality to me in my efforts to regain my health, I am impressed with the conviction that I ought not any longer to prevent them from obtaining and enjoying the labors of a man who may be able to perform all the duties, as a pastor, which their circumstances require. It is from an impression like this, that after mature reflection, I am induced cheerfully, respectfully and affectionately to resign the solemn and responsible office of pastor, which at their request I have held for more than fifteen years. In resigning my important trust among you, allow me to say that I am grateful to God that so much harmony and, as we trust, Christian tenderness and affection has at all times attended our efforts in attempting to promote the great objects of the gospel; and especially that the blessing of God to an extent so important has rested upon those efforts. With regard to the manner in which my duties as pastor, while among you, have been performed, I have little or nothing to say. So far as it has not been in accordance with the spiritual and elevated principles of that gospel I have attempted to preach, (as none is perfect,) I solicit your candor, your forgiveness and your prayers."

ness at the time of his conversion in 1831. It is related of the senior member of the firm, who just then was quite out of temper with the revival which was making matters quite warm about him, that he resolved at once to dissolve the co-partnership, under the apprehension that as religion had found its way into the establishment, everything would go at loose ends. The better thought, however, took him, and he determined to watch the new convert for three days, and see what the result would be. The first day he saw nothing that he could condemn. The second day passed, and he thought his partner in all respects a better man for the change so noticeable in all his ways; and it did not require the third of the allotted probation to convince him, that one might be "diligent in business," and at the same time "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." In brief, everything went on in that establishment, then doing the most extensive business in Auburn, the more smoothly for this new unction of piety; and not many days elapsed before the two were co-partners in godliness, that hath the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. Mr. Bartlett became a deacon the year after he united with the church; and after four years in that position, was chosen an elder in the twenty-eighth year of his age; served in that capacity fifteen years, and was clerk of the session at the time of his death. He was a man of thorough business habits, a devoted Christian, an efficient and beloved church officer; and his death was deplored as an untimely loss to the congregation and the community. He died September 23, 1851, in the forty-fourth year of his age. Our communion table, so rare in design, and tasteful and elegant in execution, is a recent family gift, and in a comely way preserves his name and memory.

Joseph B. Hyde was born in Mystic, Ct., July 27, 1807, and united with the Congregational church in Bozrah, at sixteen years of age, together with sixty others, as the fruit of a memorable revival in that place. The year after, he went to Hartford, and became identified with the North church in that city. Here he entered earnestly into spiritual work, and was encouraged by his pastor in a purpose he had already cherished, of relinquishing

business to study for the ministry. He was, however, prevented by the state of his health from entering upon the necessary course of preparation, and with reluctance gave up the idea. He came to Auburn in 1830, and became an active worker in the revival of the following year. He gave himself with much earnestness to the Sabbath School interest, both in the church and the prison. He was chosen a deacon in 1836, holding the office until his election as an elder. He was clerk of the session, and its youngest member, at the time of his death, which occurred April 10, 1847. As the funeral procession passed along Genesee and North streets, the stores were closed in token of respect; and he is still remembered as a brother much beloved for the beauty of his character and the purity of his life.

Mr. Seymour held the position of elder for forty-three years, and at his death, which occurred December 2, 1875, was the eldest of his associates in the session. He was a native of West Hartford, Ct., born April 13, 1791, and removed to this place in 1817, having received the appointment of cashier of the Bank of Auburn then just organized. In 1849 he was chosen its president, and died the oldest bank officer in the State. He was a faithful worker from youth to age. Habits of systematic diligence, doing everything in its time and place, kind offices, visits of friendship and of help, which had grown to be a part of his nature, remained with him to the last. He was a citizen of Auburn for nearly sixty years, and was thoroughly indented with its varied interests and enterprises, secular and religious. He has laid the foundation of a public library, and made provision for the establishment of a city hospital, by liberal benefactions to each object since his decease. He was a large contributor to the Theological Seminary, and was for many years in its board of trust; also to the Orphan Asylum, of which he was a trustee and the president from its organization until his death. He was the generous patron of all the departments of church benevolence, and the steadfast friend of every good cause. The kindness of the man spoke in his countenance and the tones of his voice; and long will he be remembered in the community for the wis-

dom, firmness and integrity for which he was so universally trusted. He was as well known for his strict godliness, as for his sound honesty. He had, moreover, the equanimity and unvaried courtesy, entirely void of pretension, characteristic of the true gentleman. His sympathies were ever warm toward the needy and the sorrowing, and proved most helpful to numbers in prudent counsel and substantial aid, inspired in all things by the charity that thinketh no evil—as pure in speech as it was thoughtful and constant in its gifts. He was ever ready to esteem others better than himself, and shrank with instinctive modesty from all mention of his good deeds. His memory is preserved in the affection of the church and the veneration of the community, as his name is perpetuated in the durable monuments of his public spirit, and far-sighted generosity.

Dr. Hopkins had filled a pastorate of twenty-one years in New Haven, Vt., which covered the period of his ministry before his settlement in Auburn. Though not a college graduate, he received a good academical training; and pursued his theological studies in part with Lemuel Haynes, the esteemed colored minister of Rutland. He always cherished a profound respect for Father Haynes, who in turn felt an honest pride in his theological pupil. On one occasion, and after he had been in the ministry some years, he preached for his old teacher; and when, at the close of the service several members of the congregation expressed, in the presence of the pastor, their satisfaction with the sermon, the good man laying his hand on the shoulder of his former pupil, added—“*O, yes, I always knew Josiah would turn out a good preacher.*” Dr. Hopkins was greatly respected in Vermont for his ability as a preacher and his skill as a theologian. His entire ministry in that State was in the immediate vicinity of Middlebury College; and in the esteem of none did he stand higher than with the faculty of that institution. A number of young men studied theology under his direction while there. He was a large minded, great hearted, godly man, genial in his intercourse with people of all classes, gentle in all his ways, full of practical good sense, and of courage ever tempered with discretion. He

could say without offence what from some other men, not more faithful to the truth, would create irritation and ill feeling. He was exceedingly fond of music, instrumental and vocal, and had withal a quiet humor and readiness of wit, that never forsook him. This served him in an emergency, when pastor at New Haven, of which some of us have heard him speak. He was coming one day from a neighboring distillery with his yeast jug, well replenished, by a short cut to his house across an open lot in some haste, as the good wife was waiting for the necessary article, when he saw an old and well known toper of the village on his way to the distillery. There was no avoiding the issue. He must be seen with the jug under these suspicious circumstances, and perhaps his temperance principles, well known in the community, would be compromised, at least in certain quarters. As they met in the path, face to face, the old inebriate only too glad of his chance to put a joke at the minister's expense, accosted him—"Ah, good morning, parson—a very convenient way to the still house! I see you have laid in a good supply." "Yes," said the grave man—"won't you take a drink," at the same time offering him the jug. The thirsty fellow, not dreaming but it was the genuine article, and as yet without his morning dram, took in a full draught of—yeast, which he madly sputtered out, and cleaning his face as well as he could with his fingers, passed on without another word. The practical retort was too severe and too well merited for him ever to mention the circumstance.

Father Hopkins is the first of my predecessors of whom I can speak from personal acquaintance sufficiently long to form an independent opinion. Neither brilliant in style, nor attractive in manner, he commanded attention by the clearness of his thought and carried conviction by the force of his inexorable logic. His zeal for sound doctrine made him intolerant of error; and the depth of his experience in divine things gave a spiritual savor and relish to all his instructions, public and private. He was never afraid of the truth; but with his boldness in the gospel, he mingled a simplicity and kindness of heart, that disarmed prejudice and won the general respect and good will. He was tall in per-

son, rugged in feature and of godly mien; and when that smile, many of you remember, came from his heart to his face and lit up his countenance, like a touch of sunlight on some jutting cliff, it beamed with the beauty of goodness. With a physical frame hardened by early toil, and a mental culture not common, apart from the early advantages of a liberal education, he, nevertheless, sank under the burden of his protracted ministry here—a trial not less grievous to the people than to himself. He continued, however, as his broken health would permit, to preach for limited periods to neighboring churches, in one of which he was successful in healing a serious division, and in another, the mother church of Aurelius, in Union Springs, was permitted to witness a precious revival which was as life from the dead. He soon after retired to the Water Cure at Geneva, where he died, useful to the last in kind offices among the patients, June 21, 1862, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. His remains were brought to this city, and after appropriate services in the old church whose walls had so often echoed the truth that fell from his lips, were borne by the senior members of the session to the North street cemetery, where they now rest amid the graves of many to whom he ministered in life, awaiting the resurrection of the just.

The church had now survived the generation that formed it. Of its original members not one remained. Nearly seventeen hundred names had been enrolled upon its register, more than twelve hundred of which were designated as having been removed by letter, or as having departed this life. Some had been excluded by discipline; and the number remaining in communion with the church was four hundred and forty-six.

The congregation, which had hitherto been under the ministry of men of large experience at the time of their coming upon the ground, now chose its fourth pastor, Henry A. Nelson, at the close of his preparatory studies in the Auburn Theological Seminary; and he was installed, July 29, 1846, within a month after his graduation. The relation then formed, and which continued for ten years, proved in several important particulars a transition pe-

riod in the life of the church, in which, with some change of method in administration, all that was of permanent value was retained. It became the habit to look for enlargement in connection with the regular pastoral ministration and its allied agencies, rather than to special efforts which had characterized some previous years. At no time had there been such system and organization in the use of the peculiar facilities afforded by our admirable ecclesiastical polity to develop the efficiency of the church. To aid the pastor in his work of supervision, the whole membership was arranged into twelve classes, corresponding to the number of ruling elders, and each class put in special charge of a single elder. At the same time the term of service of the elders, now divided into four classes, was limited to three years for each class, unless re-chosen at the annual meeting. This arrangement was intended to bring the congregation and its spiritual rulers into more immediate sympathy; and it is worthy of record that in the twenty-five years since this measure was adopted, in no instance has the church failed to re-affirm its original choice. A similar arrangement pertains to the functions of the deacons in their delicate and most Christian ministry to the poor. As another feature, and as a valuable educational influence, the parish library should be mentioned, now numbering over thirteen hundred volumes.

Six of the present members of the session were ordained to their office under Dr. Nelson's pastorate, and eleven in all, viz:— in 1848, Sylvester Willard, Joseph Clary, Henry H. Cooley,¹ Daniel Hewson, Thomas M. Hunt; in 1853, George Crocker,² Israel F. Terrill, Harmon Woodruff, Franklin L. Griswold; in 1854, James Hyde; and in 1855, George Underwood. Three of this number died while in office.

Thomas M. Hunt was a native of Northampton, Mass., and made a profession of religion when he was sixteen years of age. He commenced business as an apothecary, (for which he was edu-

¹ Resigned December, 1854, and removed his residence to Pittston, Pa., where he died September 20, 1873. His remains were brought to this city for interment.

² Resigned 1866, and removed to Yarmouth, Mass., where he still resides.

ated) in Springfield, Mass., where he resided some six years; when in 1830, he removed to Auburn. He held the office of deacon in the church twelve years (1836-1848) and that of elder seven years, until his death. He also served the society as a trustee for eighteen years. In his earlier religious training, he was not encouraged to take part in the meetings for social prayer and conference, the exercises of which were regarded as devolving more appropriately upon the older men; and consequently he found it next to impossible to form the habit in maturer years, much as he loved the place of prayer and communion with the people of God. But his life spoke as no words could have done. He was absolutely without reproach; was widely known for both godliness and honesty, and bore a character solid with the virtues, and luminous with the graces of a scriptural piety. He died October 26th, 1855, in the fifty-fourth year of his age.

George Underwood, born in Cooperstown, was three years of age when his father Amos Underwood removed to Auburn. He entered Hamilton College at the age of fifteen and graduated with the second honor in a class of marked ability. He evinced his regard for learning and his esteem for the college, in founding the Underwood Prize for the highest proficiency in the study of Chemistry. He was twice chosen to the Legislature of the State; and was mayor of the city in 1854. He united with this church in 1855, on profession of his faith, and the same year was chosen an elder. His professional attainments as a lawyer, his well balanced judgment, true humility, warm and cheerful piety, and consistent life singularly fitted him for the position which he was permitted so brief a time to occupy. Both as a civilian and as the attorney for a powerful railway corporation, he was governed by high moral and religious principles. In all his relations, he evinced a character in which the qualities of an amiable and generous nature were happily blended with the habits of a scrupulous piety. He spent the winter preceding his death on the island of Cuba, in hope of arresting the disease which terminated his life. He died in this city, shortly after his return, May 25, 1859, in the forty-fourth year of his age.

It was just four years to the day, that the next vacancy occurred in the session, in the death of the venerable Dr. Clary, at the time its oldest member. He was born in Conway, Mass., December 18, 1787. He studied medicine in New Hartford, and commenced its practice at the age of twenty-five years. He came to Auburn in 1812, one year after the church was formed: but fixed his residence at Throopsville, where for fifty years he was the principal physician. Although residing in an adjoining town, he was in full and active sympathy with his brethren in all measures for the welfare of the church, and most faithful in the details of his office. Occupied as he was with an extensive country practice, as the favorite physician of all that region, he was regularly in his place in the house of God, and punctual alike in his private duties and official obligations. He had attended divine service as usual on the Sabbath, visited such of his patients as were most in need of his attention, when he was seized with fever and died the following week, May 25, 1863, aged seventy-five years. His remains were followed to the grave by a very large concourse of people, and the entire funeral scene was a memorable tribute of esteem and affection for "the beloved physician."

The accessions to the church during Dr. Nelson's pastorate number three hundred and ninety-seven. There was no large increase at any one time, but a steady and healthy growth, with entire harmony, and a mutual confidence and regard alike honorable to pastor and people. But he was needed in a more difficult, and, as events proved, a more important post. The call came from the First church of St. Louis, and was pressed with earnestness, more especially in view of the interests of our own church in that section, and its relations to the question of slavery then agitating the country, and requiring firm and wise handling on the part of one occupying such a position. The congregation yielded its consent after a full presentation of the facts; and the pastoral relation was dissolved, September 8, 1856. The results of Dr. Nelson's pastorate at St. Louis, including the four years immediately preceding our civil war and the entire period of the war itself, fully justified the large expectations which were

cherished at the outset of his ability as a pastor, and his wisdom as a leader; and I only repeat, what is generally conceded, that to the influence of no other man is it more due that Missouri finally yielded to the measure of voluntary emancipation, and maintained her loyal attitude during the fearful struggle of the nation with rebellion. In 1869, Dr. Nelson accepted the chair of Theology in Lane Seminary, which he resigned in 1874, to resume the more congenial work of the pastorate. He is still in active service as pastor of the First church of Geneva, and happily there is as yet no occasion to sum up the labors and character of his ministry, as has been done in the case of each one of his predecessors.

I have thus endeavored to trace the annals of the congregation to the present pastorate, which commenced November 5, 1857. The nineteen years that remain form a considerable, and in some regards a critical period in its progress, as also in the life of the nation. Another opportunity may occur to resume the narrative; but for the present it must close here, with the mention only of a few statistics of general interest. The whole number that have entered into communion with this church from the first, is two thousand eight hundred and eighty-five. Of this number sixteen hundred and eight were received on their religious experience, and twelve hundred and seventy-seven from other churches. Ninety-five of its members have entered the Christian ministry. About two thousand and sixty have been removed by death or change of residence, and not more than one-sixth of the present membership of the church were in it nineteen years ago. The additions at that time had reached two thousand one hundred and thirty-seven. Of this number, more than two thousand have gone from us. There are scarcely sixty of those who united under the ministry of Dr. Nelson, now remaining in our communion; not more than thirty-five of the nearly one thousand added under that of Dr. Hopkins; and of the more than seven hundred received under Dr. Lansing, only seven are with us to this day. More than five hundred have passed from the communion of the church by dismissal or

death in the last nineteen years, while the whole number received in that time, is seven hundred and thirty-two, of whom four hundred and forty-six united on profession of faith. The entire roll for this period numbers eleven hundred and ninety-six; and the present membership is not far from six hundred. There have been but four changes in the board of twelve elders during this period—three by death and one by removal of residence. The church has had, in all forty ruling elders, fifteen of whom have removed to other places, and eleven have died while in office. Four of the existing number, were ordained, as follows: Albert H. Goss in 1860; Charles A. Lee in 1864; Henry J. Sartwell in 1866; and Mortimer L. Browne in 1876—all within the present pastorate.

Of the thirty-four deacons, seventeen have at different times been transferred to the bench of elders. None have died while in this office. Those who have not been already mentioned in connection with the eldership, are Palmer Holley, from 1827 to 1852; John I. Hagaman, 1827–1830; Albert Walcott, 1836–1858; John R. Hopkins, 1843–1844; Gilbert M. Milligan, 1843–1848; James B. Wilson, 1843–1845; Charles Hall, 1848–1851; Stephen Ball, 1853–1865; Joseph G. Downer, 1853–1866; Thomas B. Hudson, 1853–1855; and Isaac Cooper, 1853–1854. The present board consists of Eliphalet F. Putnam, 1853; Haverly Brooks, 1859; Richard H. Bloom, 1865; Charles P. Williams, 1865; James Seymour, Jr., 1866; and Edward C. Selover, 1876.

The secular affairs of the congregation have been conducted with like ability and care, and always in harmony with its spiritual interests. Beside the names which have already been mentioned as having had official connection with the congregation, there are to be added, as trustees, those of Isaac Selover, John H. Hardenbergh, chosen in 1836; Ebenezer Jenkins, 1839–1842; William Woods, 1842–1851; Horace L. Knight, 1843–1846; William B. Smith, 1844–1850; Henry Ivison, 1844–1846; George Dyer, 1846–1853; Corydon H. Merriman, 1847–1875; John S. Clary, 1848–1857; George W. Leonard, 1850–1865; George J. Letchworth, 1865–1871; Erastus Case, 1852–1857.¹ Four of the

¹ Died October 21, 1857.

present members of the session have, at various periods, served as trustees, viz: Richard Steel, Israel F. Terrill, Albert H. Goss, and Charles A. Lee. The board as now constituted is as follows: John Olmsted, chosen in 1837, and for many years the faithful treasurer of the society; Harmon Woodruff, 1846; John S. Fowler, 1858; Horace T. Cook, the present treasurer, 1865; Edward C. Selover, 1865; Byron C. Smith, 1871; and Warren Crocker, 1875.

In closing this narrative which has occupied our attention for two Sabbaths, we leave almost untouched a period of twenty years. It may be that after we all shall have passed away, the one who shall then occupy this place, will deem that portion of our history worthy to be rehearsed to the generation that shall then occupy these seats and uphold the interests of this venerable and honored church. Only let us be faithful while we live to the principles, both of doctrine and life, on which it was built and out of which has come all the good that it has wrought; and we may cherish the hope that after we are gone and time shall have dealt kindly with our mistakes, hiding them forever in the grave of the past, some good shall remain, deserving a place in the memories of men, and on which will rest the favor of God.



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